ISSUE 3 | MAY 2010

Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

OUT OF THE VOID!

MEET THE ALIENS OF **FIGHTING FANTASY**!

THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

MARTIN MCKENNA TALKS ABOUT HIS GAMEBOOK WORK AND ART IN THIS DIGITAL AGE

STABBED IN THE BACK!

DAGGERS OF DARKNESS IS EXAMINED IN "THE FACT OF FICTION"

MASSIVE SURVEY!

FILL OUT **YOUR** VOTING FORM!

DEFIS FANTASTIQUES

A POTTED HISTORY OF THE **FRENCH** **FIGHTING FANTASY** GAMEBOOKS

PLUS A **BRAND NEW** **FIGHTING FANTASY** MINI ADVENTURE!
CAN **YOU** AVOID BECOMING THE **prey of the hunter**?

letter from the editor

Full steam ahead! This is issue three of *Fighting Fantazaine* and we're still going strong. Three is an auspicious number, with lots of good things coming in threes, so here's hoping you agree with me when you read this issue. I'm also hoping however that before long there will be a fourth to follow this issue, and a fifth... In the meantime you can enjoy what is on offer this issue.

This time around to keep things fresh we have a space-based mini adventure from Kieran Coghlan and deftly illustrated by Peter Adamson, and to join in with the space theme Dan Satherley tackles one of the science fiction adventures of the range in his column and our regular monster corner becomes "Out of the Void" for this issue with four aliens from four different adventures lovingly recreated in text and image.

There is more of the other regulars as *Fighting Fantazine* comes to grips with artist Martin McKenna in the interview and the party of heroes continue their adventures in Adrian Young's RPG reporting. Ian Brocklehurst return with some new fiction, this time the opening events of a multipart adventure "loosely inspired" by the cinematic exploits of Indiana Jones and Ed Jolley continues to astound with the moral tidbits he summons from the gamebooks themselves. Also our popular "Fact of Fiction" section continues, this time in the hands of Warren McGuire and Andrew Wright as they plunder Luke Sharp's *Daggers of Darkness*.

But, perhaps, the most important feature of this issue is the reasonably wide-ranging survey that I promised in my editorial last issue. Featured here is the mammoth four-page survey form for YOU the reader to fill in! It covers not only your thoughts on the seventy published gamebooks to date, but a lot of the printed miscellany that has been issued by Puffin and Wizard and even asks a couple of qustions about this very fanzine as we strive to improve it each issue.

So I will take this opportunity once again to stress that we'd really welcome *everyone* filling in their survey forms and sending them back in – hopefully the offer of potential prizes will help stir some of the less motivated of you to action! The more surveys returned to *Fighting Fantazine* the more interesting the final outcome will be. Then you can all look forward to finding out which gamebook YOU all have crowned as number one in issue four.

However, don't let the survey be an excuse not to contact the fanzine at any time to make suggestions for future issues, or a barrier to contributing your own material. This fan magazine can only be as good as the people contributing to it and the team here look forward to both your completed survey form and ideas for future material.

Alex

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Fightingfantasy.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page

CONTRIBUTIONS
Contributions to the fanzine in the form of letters, articles, reviews, fanfiction, artwork, comics et cetera are welcomed and readily invited. These can be sent to the editor via e-mail as long as it is a standard format like JPEG and the scan is of high quality (1200 dpi preferred).

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
June 25th 2010

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Fighting Fantazine

THE FIGHTING FANTASY FAN MAGAZINE

ISSUE 3 | MAY 2010

FEATURES

06 interview: THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

Illustrator of the latest adventure, *Night of the Necromancer*, **Martin McKenna** talks to *Fighting Fantazine* about his life of art and illustrating *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks.

16 mini adventure: prey of the hunter

by **Kieran Coghlan**

Illustrated by **Peter Adamson**

After a mission goes wrong, YOU find yourself stranded on the lawless backwater planet of Karthran-6, forced to play the twisted game of a sadistic alien. You must use any means necessary to get off planet, for if your enemy tracks you down before you do, you're as good as dead...

52 the fact of fiction: DAGGERS OF DARKNESS

Luke Sharp's version of *Crank*, as the player races against time and a poison in their system. But on the way, take the time to stop and spot some things you may not already know.

70 Fighting Fantasy in France

The *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks have been translated and published in several other markets. **Julien Meneldur** makes an exploration of the world of the French language editions.

OTHERS

60 TURN TO PARAGRAPH 400 – THE SURVEY!
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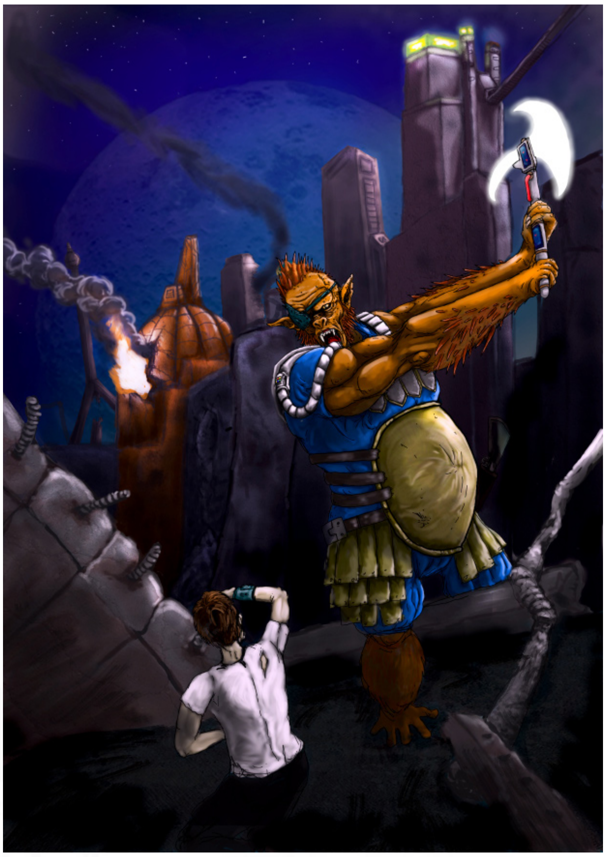

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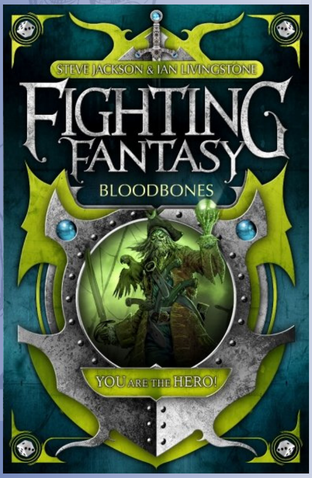
With thanks to: Martin McKenna, John Sibbick, Nick Sidwell, and the rest of the team at *Titan Rebuilding* for their support.

Where possible, permission from the artists has been sought for the reproduction of *Fighting Fantasy* art. If you have any queries about this, please contact the Editor.

"Suddenly you hear a growl and in front of you stands a huge white wolf."

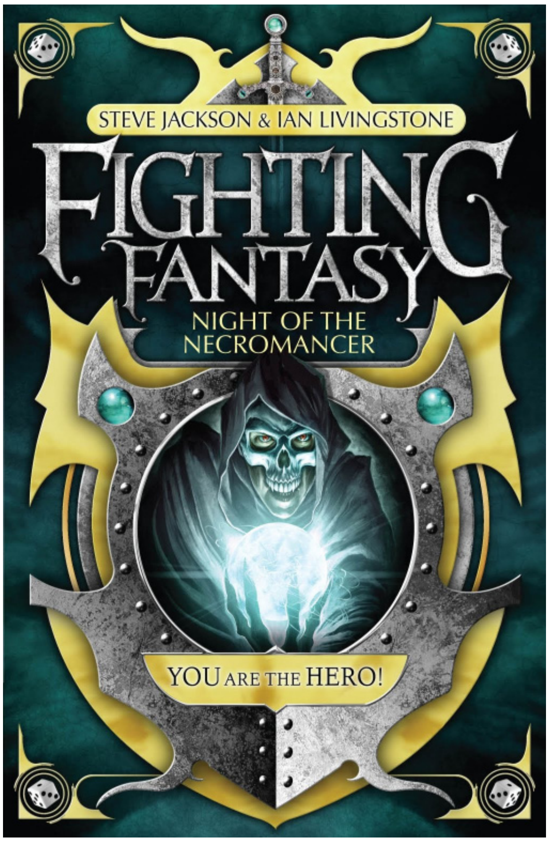
OMENS & AUGURIES


STEVE JACKSON & IAN LIVINGSTONE
FIGHTING FANTASY
BLOODBONES
YOU ARE THE HERO!

FIGHTING FANTASY
HOUSE OF HELL

FIGHTING FANTASY
EYE OF THE DRAGON

FIGHTING FANTASY
DEATHTRAP DUNGEON
NEW GAME
CONTINUE
MORE GAMES


STEVE JACKSON & IAN LIVINGSTONE
FIGHTING FANTASY
NIGHT OF THE NECROMANCER
YOU ARE THE HERO!

Hello all. This is a rather exciting time with many new gamebook releases on the horizon. There are both releases of new series and new releases in ongoing series that guarantee the interactive gamebook is far from being a dead medium. Without further ado, let's jump forward to the info.

Fighting Fantasy Fights On!

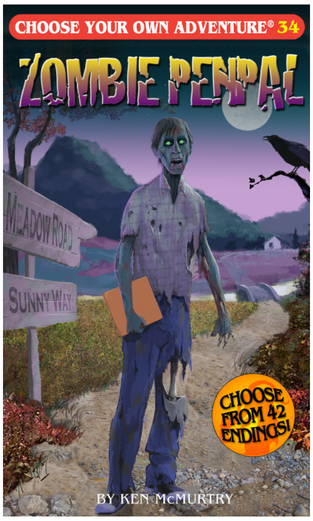
Wizard Books continues to find success with its *Fighting Fantasy* Series 2. Besides the launch of *Night of the Necromancer* and *Bloodbones* (which are already out at the time of this writing), there are reprints of *House of Hell* (#9) and *Eye of the Dragon* (#10) due in June and two additional reprints slated for September: *Howl of the Werewolf* (#11) and an as yet unconfirmed title (#12). Each will retail for 5.99 GBP. Glad to hear the new books by Jonathan Green are successful enough to be reprinted!

Big Blue Bubble has also been busy releasing a version of *Deathtrap Dungeon* for the iPhone, and announcing that Steve Jackson's *Sorcery!* saga is being converted to the same platform. The game will retail for 1.79 GBP and is scheduled for the second quarter of 2010. Visit www.fightingfantasy.com for more info.

Finally, movie madness has gripped the franchise with the planned adaptation of Steve Jakson's *House of Hell*. Details are sketchy at this stage and we hope to have more information available next issue.

An Omnibus of *Legends of Lone Wolf*

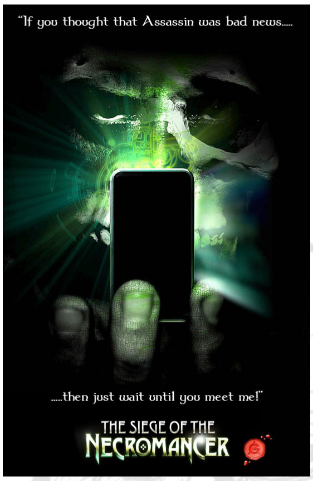
This had completely evaded my radar, but a company named Dark Quest books plans to release new editions of the entire *Legends of Lone Wolf* series in omnibus versions. These are not just reprints; author John Grant has apparently made major upgrades to each book. The first omnibus, containing *Eclipse of the Kai*, *The Dark Door Opens* and *The Sword of the Sun* is priced at 26.95 USD. Release dates are not clear yet, but keep an eye on www.darkquestbooks.com for info.


CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE® 34
ZOMBIE PENPAL
MEADOW ROAD
SUNNY WAY
CHOOSE FROM 42 ENDINGS!
BY KEN McMURTRY

Brand New! *Choose Your Own Adventure*

Chooseco has reprinted *Blood on the Handle* and *Owl Tree* as part of its *Choose Your Own Adventure* and *Dragonlarks* series, respectively. The company has also announced two new releases: the first one is a brand-new *Choose Your Own Adventure* book titled *Zombie Penpal* by Ken McMurtry (marking the first entry by this author into the main *Choose Your Own Adventure* series; previously he had written for the *Passport* and *Choose Your Own Nightmare* series). The second one is the long-promised rerelease of *Behind the Wheel* by R. A. Montgomery. *Zombie Penpal* is scheduled for May and *Behind the Wheel* for August. Both will retail for 6.99 USD. Visit www.cyoa.com for more info.

The Adventures Continue...
Gamebook Adventures


"If you thought that Assassin was bad news.....
.....then just wait until you meet me!"
THE SIEGE OF THE
NECROMANCER

The release of the first iPhone gamebook, *An Assassin in Orlandes*, apparently did quite well. Now not one but two sequels are in development, the first one titled *The Siege of the Necromancer*. No release dates have been given yet, but we will keep readers posted. Visit www.tinmangames.com.au for more info.

Twisted Journeys

This pick-a-path/comic book series continues its run with two titles slated for September: *Agent Mongoose and the Attack of the Giant Insects* and *The Quest for Dragon Mountain*. Both are available for preorder from www.amazon.com at 7.95 USD.

Beast Quest: Master Your Destiny

The *Beast Quest* franchise of fantasy novels for children has added a pick-a-path book to its ranks: *The Dark Cauldron* is a simple, 112-page book priced at 4.99 GBP which is already out. Visit www.beastquest.co.uk to learn more.

You Choose: Interactive History Adventures

The *You Choose* series of historical gamebooks has recently shifted its approach to putting the reader in the shoes of warriors from different historical eras. Thus the series continues with three new titles expected in August: *Life as a Samurai*, *Life as a Gladiator* and *Life as a Viking*. The paperback editions will retail for 6.95 USD.

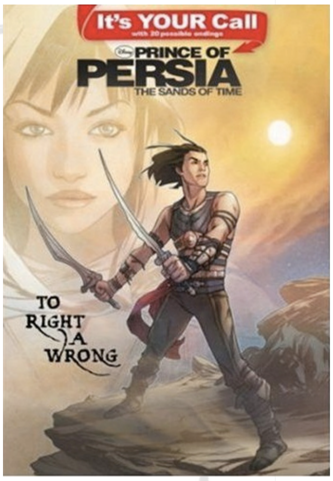
Playing Cowboy

Kenzer and Company have returned to the gamebook arena with a new Western-genre gamebook that uses the d20 system. *Bad Day at Buena Roca* makes the player a defender of a frontier town from a band of murderous outlaws. The book ties in with Kenzer's popular *Aces & Eights* role-playing game. The pdf is available for 4.99 from www.rpgnow.com and www.drivethrurpg.com. No additional rules are needed to play.

Film and Television Tie-ins
Doctor Who: Decide your Destiny

Besides *Claw of the Macra* and *The Coldest War*, there are two more releases in the series scheduled this year. *Empire of the Wolf* and *Judoon Monsoon* will be released in September at 5.99 GBP each.

It's Your Call: Prince of Persia



We spoke about this pick-a-path series in a previous issue of this fanzine. *The Guardian's Path* and *To Right a Wrong* will be out by the time you read this, both priced at 4.99 USD. Let's hope both they and the *Prince of Persia* film they are based on are good.

Foreign Tongues
Tú decides la aventura

Tú Decides la Aventura
CAMPAMENTO VAMPIRO
Victor Conde

This Spanish-language pick-a-path series has been successful enough to reach its tenth installment. *Campamento Vampiro* (*Vampire Camp*) is available at the time of this writing for 9.95 EUR. Also noteworthy is the fact that the first four books in the series are now available in the Catalan language. Visit www.editorialhidra.com for more info.

German Series

Jens Schumacher
DU entscheidest!
DIE WELT DER 1000 ABENTEUER
Geisterspuk in der Zwergenmine

Germany is also experiencing a time of new gamebook releases, most notably those of fantasy author Markus Heitz. Pegasus Spiele is releasing a new gamebook by Heitz set in his Ulldart fantasy world. *Perdors Untergang* is scheduled for July 2010 and will retail for 8.95 EUR. Visit www.pegasus.de for more info.

Less well-known is the *Die Welt der 1000 Abenteuer* series, which is a full-system fantasy gamebook series now on its second title. *Geisterspuk in der Zwergenmine* is now available and retails for 9.95 EUR in stores like ww.amazon.de.

Xhoromag

This group of authors from Quebec has also been fairly active in the gamebook arena, contributing to the once vibrant French-language gamebook scene. They have released two books in recent weeks, including *L'errant d'Iâh-Xor* (book 5 in the *Xhoromag* series) by Martin Charbonneau, Mylène Villeneuve and Stéphan Bilodeau. Another one is *Le Démon des glaces* (book 8 in the *A vous de jouer* series) by Martin Charbonneau and Stéphan Bilodeau. Both are available at 9.95 CAD from Editions Ada. Visit www.ada-inc.com to buy and also drop by the wonderful site at homepage.mac.com/siyanlis/Xhoromag.htm, which has many fan-written gamebooks available. **FF**

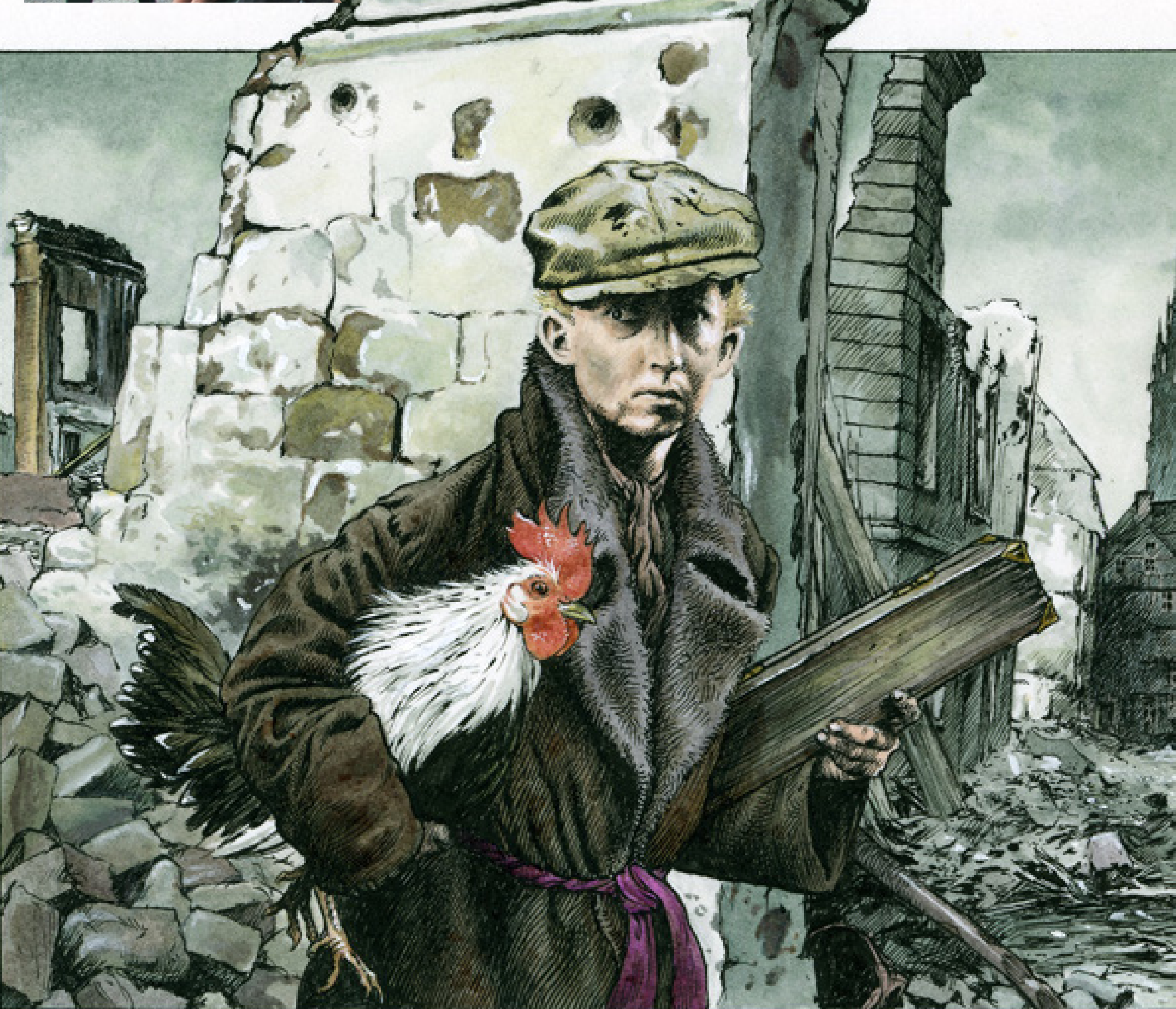
***Martin McKenna** is a long-established illustrator of the* Fighting Fantasy *gamebook range, the artist recently teaming up once more with writer Jonathan Green for April's new title* Night of the Necromancer. *Martin was gracious enough to take the time to answer a few questions asked of him by* Fighting Fantazine.

FIRST SKETCHES

Was art something that was encouraged by your family, or were you expected to pursue a career in other directions?

Luckily my folks were fully supportive of whatever daft thing I wanted to try instead of getting

THE



Art: © Martin McKenna, 2010. Used with permission.

a real job.

At which point did you decide that this was a job that you wanted to pursue?

From a very young age I'd decided I wanted to draw things for a living. Either that or be a zoo-keeper if that meant I got to hose down the tapirs.

Which artists have proven to be an inspiration for you, then and now?

All sorts of folk, a very significant one being John Bolton when I saw his artwork for the *Curse of the Werewolf* comic-strip in *House of Hammer* magazine when I was about six.

Your first paid commission was *Monsterous Perversion* no.2. What was this and how did the commission come about?

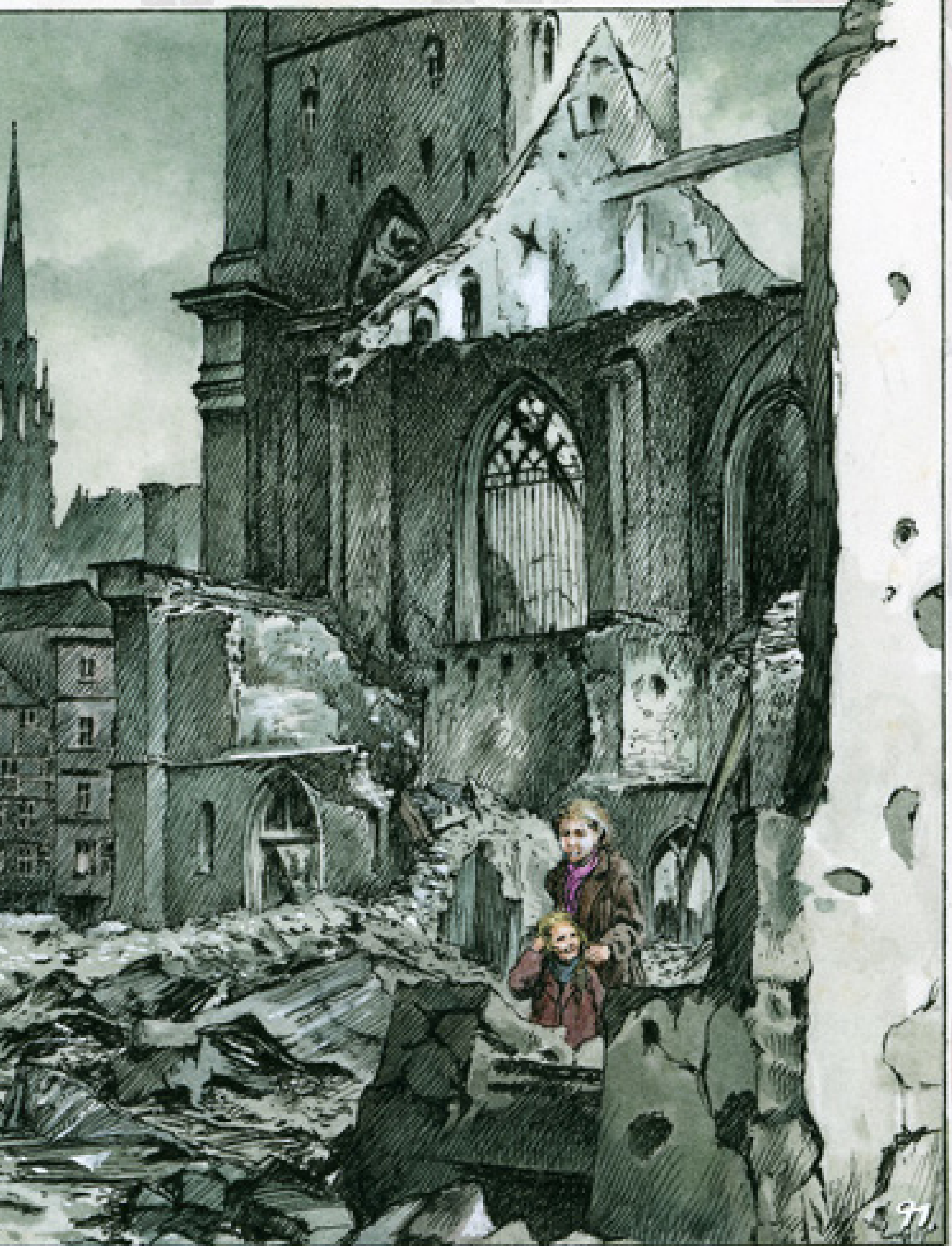
Oh that wasn't paid... far from it. That was a fanzine in the mid-'80s put together by Pete Blanchard. He advertised for artists in the small ads of an issue of *White Dwarf* magazine, and by a quirk of fate that issue was the first gaming publication I ever bought and I saw his ad and responded to it. I was the only person to do so. Anyway it was the very first, albeit rather strange, step that I took towards doing anything even remotely professionally. It gave me valuable experience and in the end got my stuff seen by a few industry people.

How did it feel to be paid for your artistic efforts? Do you still feel the same now?

It was a thrill to get paid for my first ever commissioned artwork all those years ago (which turned out to be for *Warlock* magazine). Luckily I've occasionally been paid since, and it's still a thrill when it happens.

FIGHTING FANTAZINE TALKS TO ARTIST **MARTIN MCKENNA** IN THE WAKE OF THE RELEASE OF *NIGHT OF THE NECROMANCER*

PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD



HAVE PEN, WILL TRAVEL

How did you come to work on *Warlock* in 1986?

I met Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone for the first time at a convention in London earlier that year – my pimply fifteen-year old self approached them with a copy of a *Fighting Fantasy* spoof adventure Pete Blanchard and I had done for *Die Rubezahl* (the follow-up 'zine to *Monsterous Perversion*). Among the illos I did for it was one of Jackson & Livingstone torturing a Hobbit. Anyway they seemed to find it amusing and liked the pics and suggested I could be doing stuff for *Warlock*. They told me I should send some samples to Games Workshop (who had just taken over publishing the mag from Puffin) and their newly-appointed art director John Blanche.

Was it then a natural progression to doing the interior art for one of the gamebooks in 1988 (*Daggers of Darkness*), or were there further hurdles or hoops you had to climb

Left: Martin's art for the cover of the 1995 Oxford University Press edition of *The Silver Sword* by Ian Serraillier.

through first?
I suppose it was a natural progression... John Blanche, who was tremendously supportive and encouraging because I was only tiny, recommended I send stuff in to the editors at Puffin (he knew them of course, having illustrated the *Sorcery!* books etc). I illustrated that first book when I was sixteen or seventeen and still at school – hugely inexperienced! I'm not sure they knew I was that young and clueless...

By the time you were commissioned for *Daggers*, what other works were you being commissioned to work on?
So hard to remember, it's an age ago... mostly I was doing bits and pieces for Games Workshop: stuff for *White Dwarf* magazine and *Warhammer* things. I'd done a few other things that saw print, including a Lovecraftian horror comic strip with Brian Lumley for *Dagon* magazine.

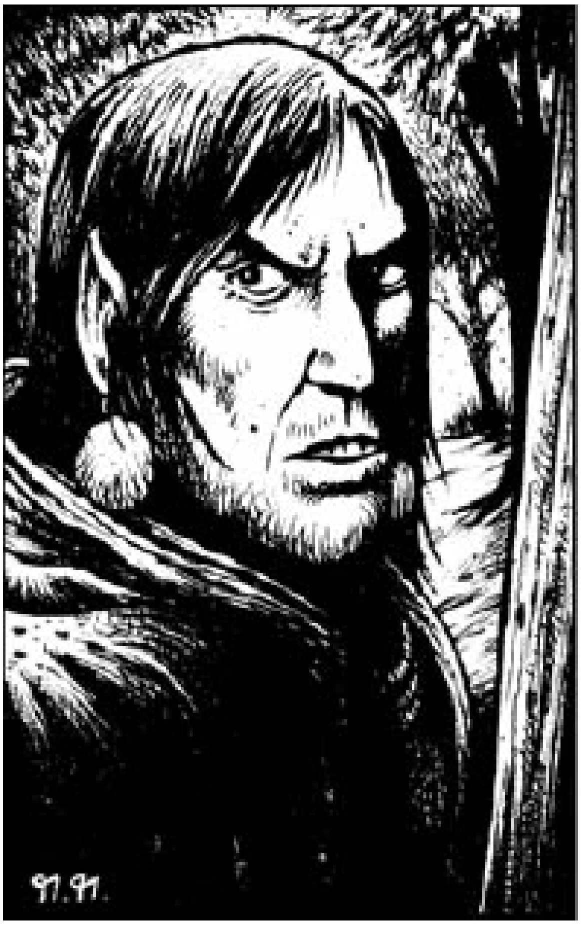
How has your illustration technique changed between then and now?
Well for a start I hope it's improved... The main change of course, in more recent years, is going digital, so all my inks and pens have long since dried up and gone crusty. Stylistically, I'm probably still doing the same kind of stuff – the commissions still call for goblins and dark knights and all that.

What materials did you prefer to use before you began working digitally?
I was a big fan of Rapidograph pens, I did all my black and white ink drawing with those along with dip pens occasionally. Colour stuff was was mostly inks, either Windsor & Newton coloured inks or Daler acrylic ink, or a combination.

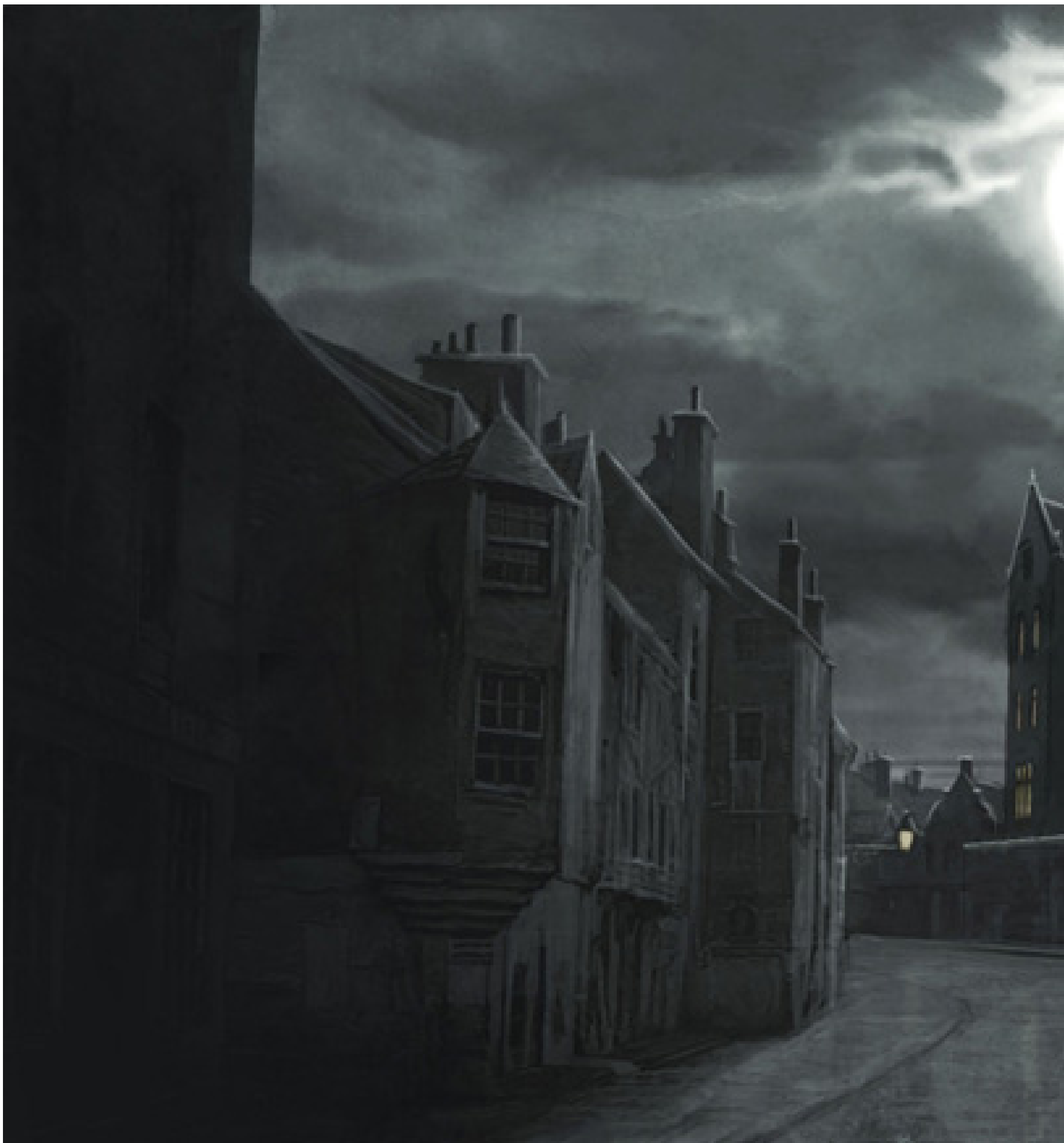
When did you begin making the transition from traditional illustration techniques to computer-based illustration?
That came with my working in-house at Eidos Interactive, which I did for a couple of years starting in 1997. I was presented with my first computer and Wacom tablet, and I tried to look like I knew how to switch them on.

Is all the work you now provide completed in the digital realm, or do you still undertake commissioned done in a traditional manner?
Yep it's all in that there realm now and I must admit I prefer it that way. I don't miss the unforgiving business of drawing in ink, or any of the rest of it; spilling broth on something that'd taken a week to do, or carefully packaging up originals that then get lost or bent in the post. Madness!

Did you ever have the chance to trade notes with fellow *Fighting Fantasy* artists? If so, what handy tips do you think you picked up?
Down the years I guess I've met a few, so plenty of opportunity to grumble about everything. Not sure about handy tips... erm... I learned from Tony Hough how



Above: One of Martin's first paid pieces of artwork, a Dryaden from "Out of the Pit" in *Warlock* #12 (1986).



Right: A piece of concept art for the film *The Wolfman* (2010).

Art: © Martin McKenna, 2010. Used with permission.

not to play the kazoo.

Which of the currently un-reprinted *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks you illustrated would you most like to see back in print?
Oh I'm not sure... don't mind!

EARLY GAMEBOOKS – *DAGGERS OF DARKNESS* AND *VAULT OF THE VAMPIRE*

How daunting was your first *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook to illustrate?
Probably fairly. Being just a wee bairn I daresay it seemed like a tall order – I think I was pretty sure I'd bugger it up and I'd never get to work on anything ever again.

What sort of deadline were you given to work with the book?
Can't remember, but I expect it was the usual few weeks.

Do you recall if there was any particular illustration that gave you fits trying to pen?
Hmm... no, it's more than likely they all did.

Are you given briefs for the repeated art that spaces out the paragraphs or is this left to your imagination?
The fillers... no they're usually briefed too.

You are on record as believing that your art for *Daggers* shows your lack of confidence and experience. Could you explain exactly what you mean?
Did I say that? I was probably right – no ta, I'd rather not look too closely.

***Vault of the Vampire* was your second *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook. Were you actively pursuing the range for work or were they coming to you?**
I vaguely recall thinking I'd never hear from them again, but was quite pleased when they got back in touch and asked me to do another.

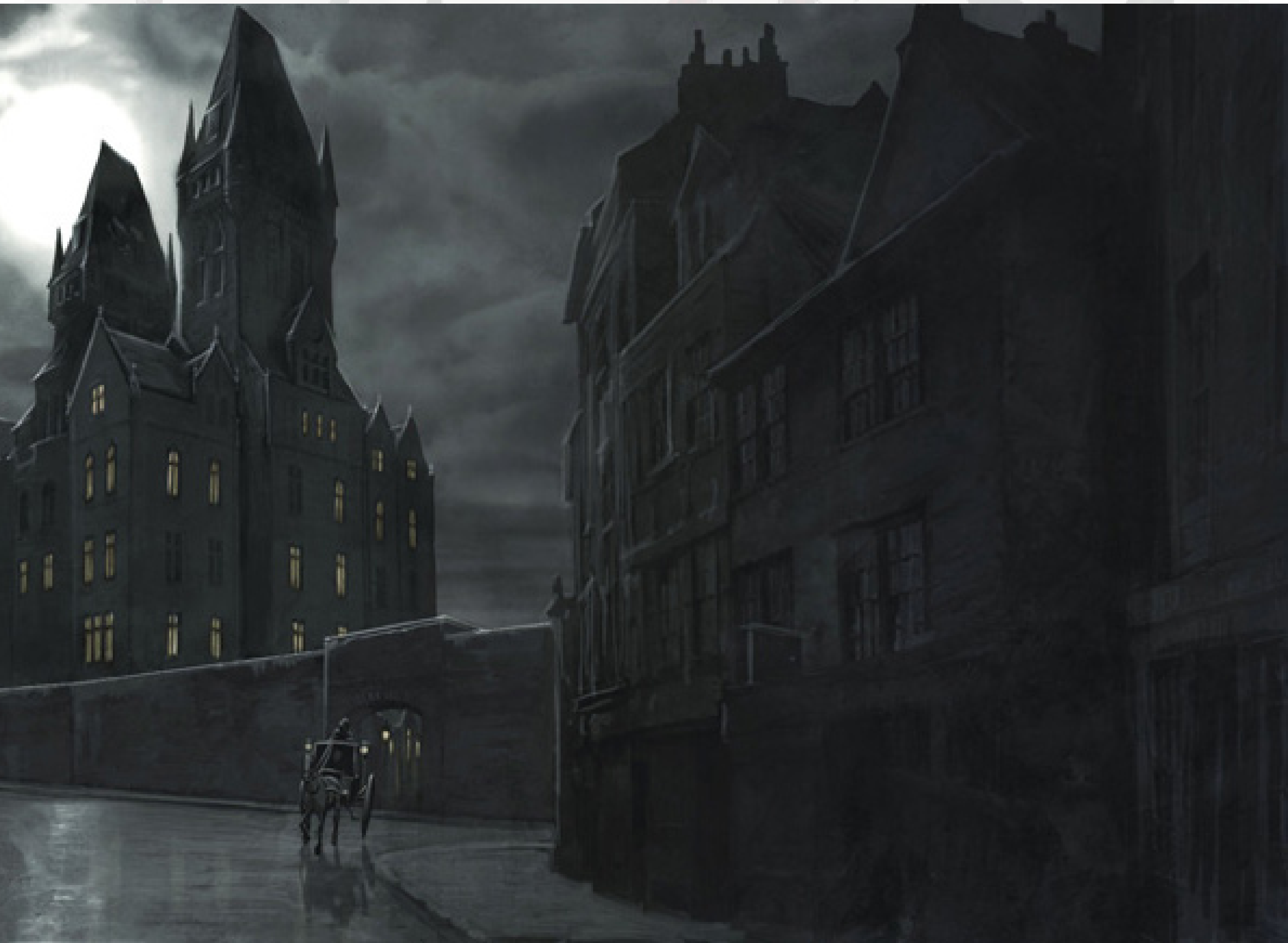
Can you recall how easy was it to realize Keith Martin's illustration briefs?
Fairly straightforward I think... it was mostly familiar territory from all the Hammer horrors I'd grown up with.

This is one of several gamebooks to feature a colour map. Had you ever been tempted to try doing one yourself?
Not really, I was never asked. I've done maps for other stuff, they can be sort of fun.

To date, which is your favourite out of your internal *Fighting Fantasy* illustrations?
I think the werewolf pic from *Vault of the Vampire* looks okay.

A TRIO OF HANDS – *DEAD OF NIGHT*, *LEGEND OF THE SHADOW WARRIORS* AND *MOONRUNNER*

What sort of schedule do you give yourself for completing the required artwork?



On these books it'd be one picture every day. Used to be I'd do the pencils in the morning, have a Kit-Kat, ink in the afternoon. Now digitally I just draw such things all in one go.

Do you one on one picture at a time, or work on several at one go?

A picture per day, one at a time, just to keep it simple – at least that was the plan... if time was running out I'd try to get two or three or more done in a day!

Stephen Hand is on record as liking your art for this book. How much feedback on your art have you received from the writers of the various *Fighting Fantasy* books you have illustrated?

Various amounts, some guys have been in touch during a book or afterwards and we've had a nice chat.

Do you look at the work of other *Fighting Fantasy* artists for inspiration/ideas?

When I was a kid, before working on the books, I loved the artwork in the *Fighting Fantasy* stuff, especially Iain McCaig and Les Edwards – both a big influence on me.

Did working with a specific author a second time around on *Legend of the Shadow Warriors* make it easier to interpret what they wanted for the interior art?

Maybe, but I knew where Stephen was coming from anyway with all his horror references.

Dave Carson had one picture nixed from *Beneath Nightmare Castle* due to being considered too disturbing. Did this ever happen to you with any of your *Fighting Fantasy* art? What about any non-*Fighting Fantasy* art?

I vaguely remember one picture being refused because of something unsavoury being done with a crucifix, not sure from which book. Once or twice things were tweaked, memorably when the editor at Puffin used Tipp-Ex to remove blood from a vampire lady's cleavage. It was sometimes tricky to illustrate the more visceral aspects of *Fighting Fantasy* in what was ostensibly a series for children.

You mention Dave Carson; he and I are old friends, and we collaborated on a book many years ago. Recently a reader got in touch to tell us how disgusted he was by the graphic nature of some of the artwork, and that he'd been forced to cover up some of the images so that he could stand to read the book. Reactions like that can make it all seem worthwhile.

Some artists are guilty of slipping in in-jokes or references to other things in their art. Have you ever done such with your *Fighting Fantasy* art?

I think I've probably slipped in a few favourite genre things, such as imagery from '70s *Doctor Who* which I grew up watching; and at least one pet.

Given your liking of *Doctor Who*, would you want to take a crack at being a conceptual artist for the show?

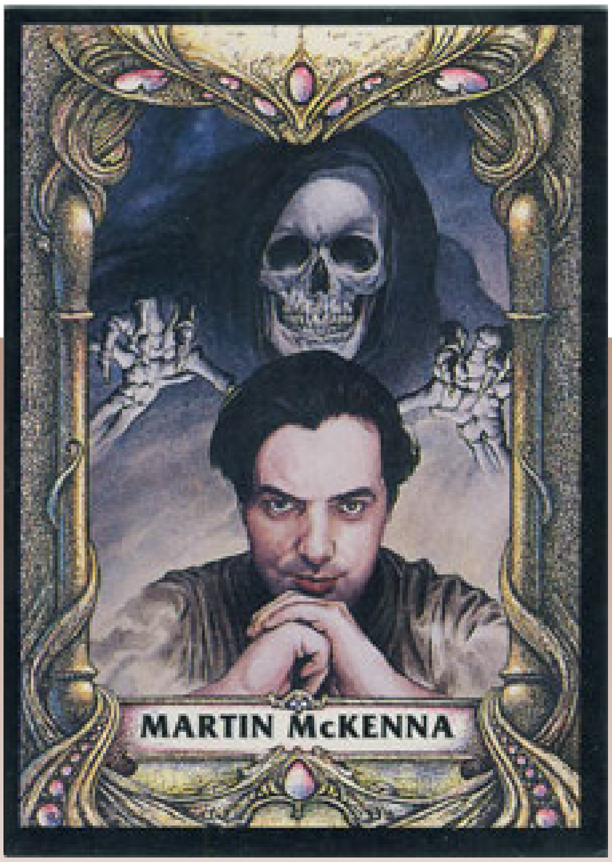
I suppose it could be quite fun (especially if designing monsters, that's always fun), but not being a great fan of the modern show it's not something I've actively pursued. My real fondness for the programme only lasted up until about 1981! Right now [late March '10] I'm quite looking forward to seeing what Steven Moffat does with the new series, which starts this Easter on TV in the UK.

Is there an example of a picture where you ended up following the brief very little?

I suspect I'm guilty of this all the time!

According to Stephen Hand with *Moonrunner* you were pushed for time with illustrating this title. What was the cause of this?

I really can't remember, but it was probably something like making a start on the pictures the day before everything was due to be delivered.



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SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

FIGHTING FANTASY

Night of the Necromancer (2010)	Cover/interior art
Bloodbones (2010)	Cover*
City of Thieves (2010)	Cover*
The Warlock of Firetop Mountain (2009)	Cover
Howl of the Werewolf (2007)	Cover/interior art
Spellbreaker (2007)	Cover
Curse of the Mummy (2007)	Cover*/interior art*
Bloodbones (2006)	Cover
Talisman of Death (2006)	Cover
Eye of the Dragon (2005)	Cover/interior art
The Seven Serpents RPG (2004)	Cover design
Forest of Doom RPG (2004)	Cover/interior art
Legend of Zagor (2004)	Cover/interior art*
Temple of Terror (2004)	Cover
Kharé - Cityport of Traps RPG (2004)	Interior art
Trial of Champions RPG (2004)	Cover/interior art
Island of the Lizard King (2003)	Cover
Return to Firetop Mountain (2003)	Cover/interior art*

When following an art brief, how closely do you follow the writer's use of referencing other sources as inspiration?
I'm happy to go with whatever's being suggested... movie references are fine and can kick-start an image all the quicker.

DOUBLE YOUR ZAGOR! – *RETURN TO FIRETOP MOUNTAIN* AND *LEGEND OF ZAGOR*

Were you surprised to be given the celebratory 50th gamebook to illustrate?
I probably was... it may have seemed more likely that Russ Nicholson would do it.

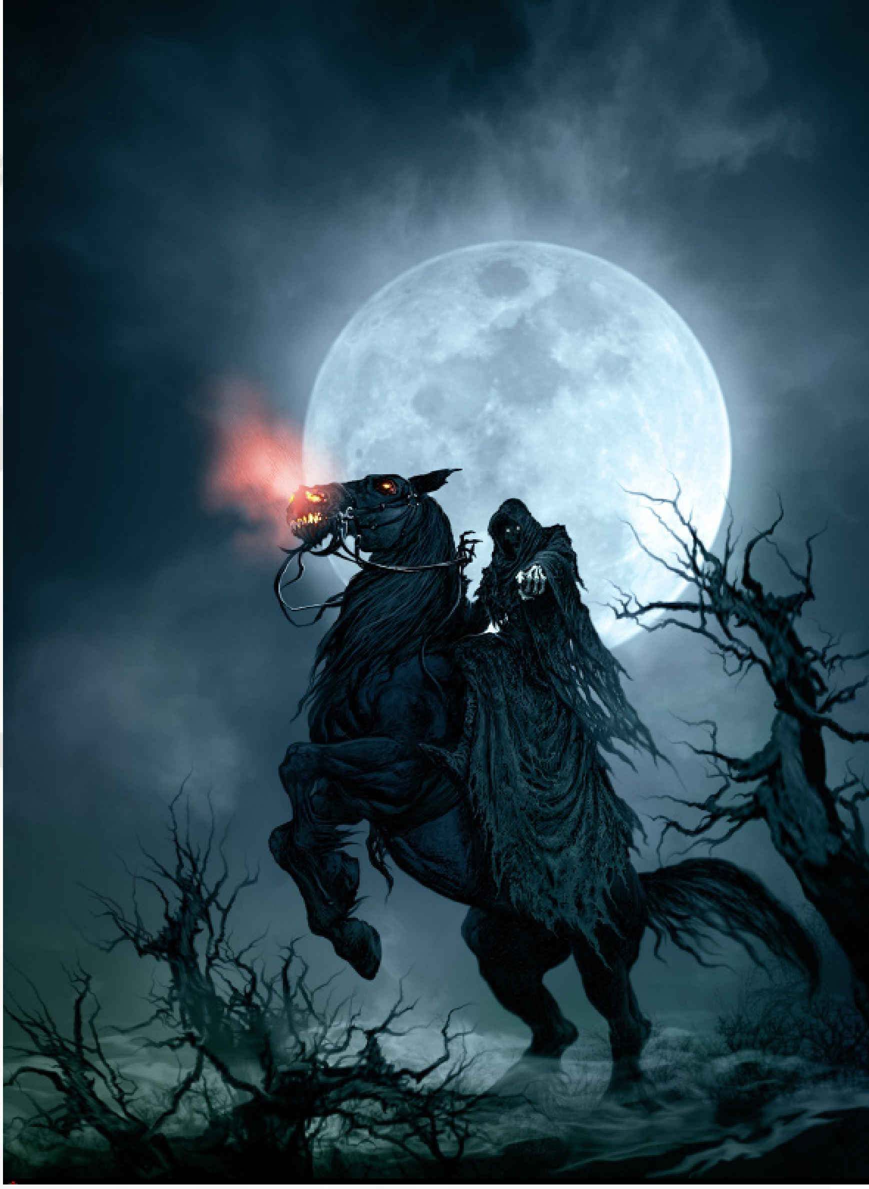
Whose idea was it to have Ian Livingstone and the Puffin *Fighting Fantasy* logo cameo in paragraph 262?
I think that was his.

How aware were you that this book might have been the end of the Puffin range?
I don't think I was aware at the time. Ah, no come to think of it maybe the editor at Puffin mentioned something about it on the 'phone, but then the next book came along quite quickly.

Did Puffin approach you about providing the cover artwork for *Legend of Zagor*, or was this something that you had been pursuing?
They asked me, I seem to remember.

You shared the cover art with Jim Burns. How did that arrangement come about?
Jim had done the box art for the *Legend of Zagor* board game, so it was used as the main part of the book cover. I did all the interior art for the game, including the character portraits, so that's why they appear.

What was the process like working with another artist on a work of art?
We had no contact about it at all, it was all done separately.



Opposite page: Martin's self-portrait for the *Battlecards* series (1993).
Above: Martin's cover art for the Wizard "Series 1" release of *Talisman of Death* (2006).

The Shamutanti Hills RPG (2003)	Interior art
Deathtrap Dungeon RPG (2003)	Interior art
Armies of Death (2003)	Cover
Trial of Champions (2003)	Cover
Caverns of the Snow Witch RPG (2003)	Interior art
The Warlock of Firetop Mountain RPG (2003)	Cover/interior art
Forest of Doom (2003)	Cover
City of Thieves (2002)	Cover
The Warlock of Firetop Mountain (2002)	Cover
Deathtrap Dungeon Video Game (1998)	Cover/interior art
Curse of the Mummy (1995)	Cover/interior art
Revenge of the Vampire (1995)	Interior art
Steve Jackson's BattleCards (1993)	Packaging/card art
Legend of Zagor (1993)	Cover/interior art
Legend of Zagor boardgame (1993)	Interior art
The Fighting Fantasy 10th Anniversary Yearbook (1992)	Interior art
Return to Firetop Mountain (1992)	Interior art
Moonrunner (1992)	Interior art
Legend of the Shadow Warriors (1991)	Interior art
Steve Jackson's F.I.S.T. (1989)	Advertising art
Dead of Night (1989)	Interior art
Vault of the Vampire (1989)	Interior art
Daggers of Darkness (1988)	Interior art
Warlock #13 (1986)	Interior art
Warlock #12 (1986)	Interior art

* = reprinted material

OWN BOOKS

Fantasy Art Now: The Very Best in Contemporary Fantasy Art and Illustration (2007)	Author/editor/artist
Digital Horror Painting Workshop (2006)	Author/artist
Digital Fantasy Painting Workshop (2004)	Author/artist

How happy are you with the finished cover art?
Well it was okay, but doesn't entirely work does it? I didn't have much reaction to it one way or the other.

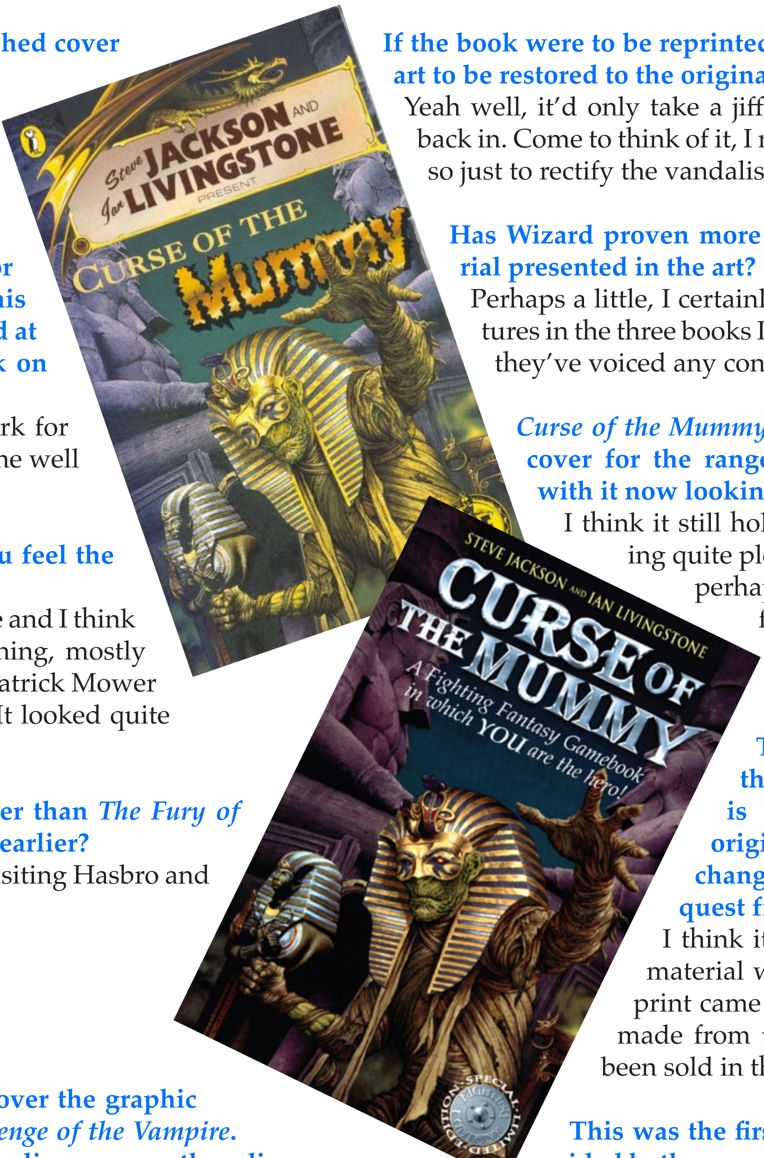
You ended up doing the art for the matching boardgame. Was this something that was commissioned at the same time or after your work on the book?
If I remember correctly all the work for Hasbro on the board game was done well before the book.

Looking back now at, how do you feel the boardgame worked out?
It was okay... I think I played it once and I think it might've been vaguely entertaining, mostly because of the electronic voice of Patrick Mower ("Dwarf, you ammmuuuse me"). It looked quite pretty!

Was the working experience better than *The Fury of Dracula* boardgame several years earlier?
Not especially! It was interesting visiting Hasbro and working for them.

END OF THE LINE – *REVENGE OF THE VAMPIRE* AND *CURSE OF THE MUMMY*

You ran afoul of Puffin's editors over the graphic nature of some of your art in *Revenge of the Vampire*. Do you think you overstepped the line or were the editors perhaps being over cautious?
As I said earlier it was sometimes tricky avoiding gratuitous stuff in what were supposed to be books for kids... Puffin were often quite cautious, rightly so I guess; it was all about achieving a kind of 'fun' level of blood and gore.


Steve Jackson AND Jon LIVINGSTONE PRESENT
CURSE OF THE MUMMY
STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
CURSE OF THE MUMMY
A Fighting Fantasy Gamebook in which YOU are the hero!
SPECIAL LIMITED EDITION

If the book were to be reprinted, would you want your art to be restored to the original bloodier version?
Yeah well, it'd only take a jiffy to draw the juicy bits back in. Come to think of it, I might have already done so just to rectify the vandalism.

Has Wizard proven more flexible over the material presented in the art?
Perhaps a little, I certainly can't think of any pictures in the three books I've done for them where they've voiced any concerns.

***Curse of the Mummy* marked your first solo cover for the range. How happy are you with it now looking back at it?**
I think it still holds up... I remember being quite pleased with it at the time, perhaps the first large-scale full-colour pic I'd done that I wasn't annoyed with.

The colour palate for the Wizard Books release is quite different to the original picture. Was this a change on your part or a request from Wizard?
I think it was simply the source material we had available; the reprint came from a transparency I'd made from the original (which had been sold in the US in 1996).

This was the first book where you provided both cover and interior art. Did the combination provide a greater challenge to meeting the required deadlines?
I don't think so, but I think the internal *pics* got rushed a bit.

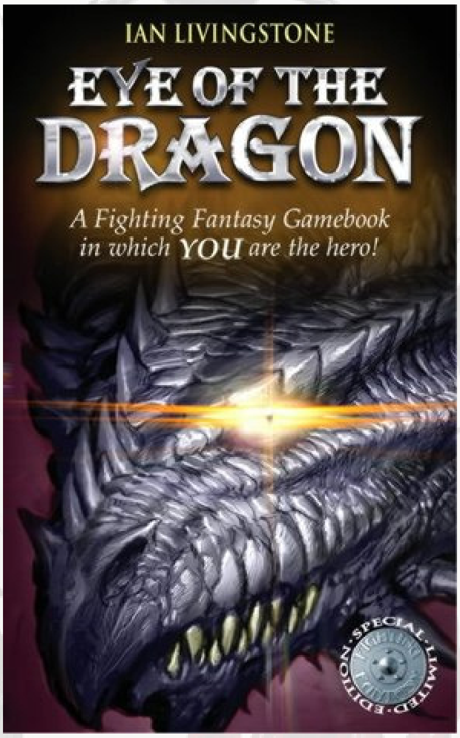
Both the sarcophagi on the cover and the mummies in the

SELECTED OTHER BOOKS

Lesser Shades of Evil (2007)	Interior art
The Key to Rondo (2007)	Cover art
Drawing and Painting Fantasy Landscapes and Cityscapes (2006)	Contributor
The Forgotten Spell (2006)	Cover / interior art
Settling Accounts #2: Drive to the East (2005)	Cover art
The Toxic Toadburger Conspiracy (2005)	Cover art
Worldwar: Homeward Bound (2005)	Cover art
Valley of Lights (2005)	Cover art
Anatomy for Fantasy Artists (2005)	Interior art
Dhampir (2005)	Cover art
How to Draw and Sell Digital Cartoons (2004)	Interior art
Settling Accounts #1: Return Engagement (2004)	Cover art
Drawing and Painting Fantasy Figures (2003)	Interior art
Dragonlance: Age of Mortals (2003)	Interior art
Sovereign Stone: Marauders of the Wolf (2003)	Interior art
Journey into the Void (2003)	Cover art
King of Foxes (2003)	Cover art
The Mammoth Book of Stephen Jones (2003)	Interior art
Thinking Through Religion (2003)	Interior art
Hawk Eyes (2003)	Cover art
Digital Fantasy Painting (2002)	Interior art
Talon of the Silver Hawk (2002)	Cover art
Doctor Who: Nightdreamers (2002)	Frontispiece
Nobilis (2002)	Interior art
Fire! Fire! (2002)	Interior art
Reach for the Stars (2002)	Interior art
The Cosmic Clock (2002)	Interior art
Guardians of the Lost (2001)	Cover art
The Dinosaur Planet Omnibus (2001)	Cover art
Oxford Mathswise Posters (2001)	Poster art

interior art are strikingly like the same from the *Doctor Who* story *Pyramids of Mars*. Was this a deliberate decision or a reflection of what source materials you had on hand?
That was me being naughty and sticking in some favourite things. Naughty, or lazy.

What are your feelings on the end of the Puffin range and how Puffin handled the discontinuation?
I've no idea how they handled it, I wasn't really in touch with *Fighting Fantasy* things at that point; the series just seemed to fade out, and I didn't really notice when they stopped. I remember someone from Puffin phoning me to offer me the internal art on *Bloodbones*, which must've been in '95, and I turned it down – mostly, I seem to remember, because they were really tight and the fee they offered hadn't changed since that first book I did in '86! So at the time I wasn't interested, and that was the last I ever heard.



How comfortable were you with doing a self-portrait for Steve Jackson's BattleCards series of trading cards? Did you take any liberties to present yourself in a better light?
I was perfectly okay with it... I did it pretty straight and with honesty, and if I'd been trying to present myself in a better light I'd have given myself a less awful haircut – but it was the early '90s.

COVER VERSIONS – 2002 RELAUNCH

How did you come to be considered as an artist for the covers of the 2002 relaunch?
I guess I was just a known face.

Which of the new covers you provided are you most happy with? Which are you the least satisfied with?
I think *Return to Firetop Mountain* looks okay... *Talisman of Death* and *Bloodbones* are okay and I can live with some of the others. I tend to avoid looking at *Island of the Lizard King* and *Armies of Death*.

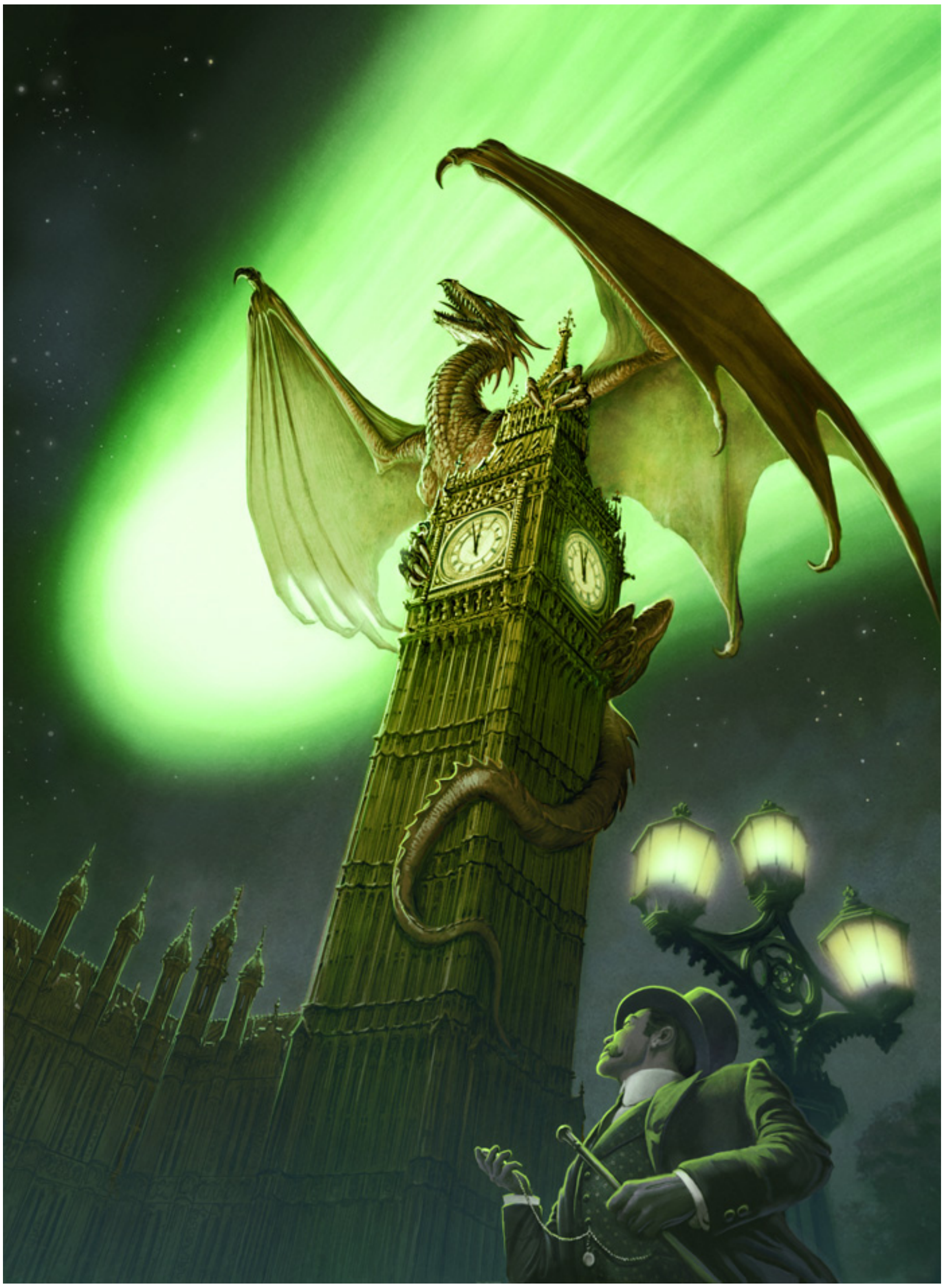
Initially the reprints had a fairly rapid release rate, did this create additional pressure on you when working on the covers?
Don't think so, I just turned them out as required.

There was apparently an error with the cover for *Return to Firetop Mountain*. What was it and why were you not consulted about the correction? Have there been other instances where similar things have occurred with respect to your art?
I vaguely recall some minor glitch, but I guess it was no big deal. Horrible things happen to artwork in print all the time! Very few covers turn out looking how I wanted, either too dark or too pale or whatever.

Have you ever had the chance to illustrate (cover or interior) a favourite book of yours? If not, which one would you like to tackle?
Sadly I don't think I've ever been commissioned to illustrate something which was already a favourite... *Jekyll & Hyde* was perhaps the closest, and I didn't do it justice. I suppose I'd like to illustrate more Lovecraft, or attempt the ghost stories of M.R. James.

Opposite page: The two different versions of the *Curse of the Mummy* cover.
Right: The unused cover for *Eye of the Dragon*.

The Building Site (2001)	Interior art
Mummies, Tombs, and the Afterlife (2001)	Cover/interior art
The Vikings (2001)	Cover/interior art
Arthur Warrior Chief (2001)	Cover art
Honour Guard (2001)	Cover art
Pacific Warriors (2001)	Cover art
Well of Darkness (2000)	Cover art
Road Wars (2000)	Cover art
Search and Rescue 2 (2000)	Cover art
The Ultimate Book of Dinosaurs (2000)	Interior art
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (2000)	Interior art
Challenging the Wolf (1997)	Cover/interior art
The Mammoth Book of Dracula (1997)	Interior art
Silver Rhapsody (1996)	Interior art
The Night of the Green Dragon (1996)	Cover/interior art
Everway (1985)	Interior art
Out There in the Darkness (1995)	Cover art
The Silver Sword (1995)	Cover/interior art
Northern Chills (1994)	Cover/interior art
Shadows Over Innsmouth (1994)	Cover/interior art
The Anthology of Fantasy and the Supernatural (1994)	Interior art
The Mammoth Book of Frankenstein (1994)	Interior art
The Mammoth Book of Werewolves (1994)	Interior art
The Mammoth Book of Zombies (1993)	Interior art
The Mammoth Book of Vampires (1992)	Interior art
Storm Warriors (1991)	Interior art
Krokodil Tears (1990)	Interior art
Demon Download (1990)	Interior art
Red Thirst (1990)	Interior art
Wolf Riders (1989)	Interior art
Ignorant Armies (1989)	Interior art
Zaragoz (1989)	Interior art
Drachenfels (1989)	Interior art



Above: A piece of art for the as yet unpublished *Mirabilis* comic book by fellow *Fighting Fantasy* alumni Dave Morris and Leo Hartas (2008).
Opposite: Draft art for the cover of *Eye of the Dragon* (2005).

Art: © Martin McKenna, 2010. Used with permission.

BACK IN THE SADDLE – *EYE OF THE DRAGON* AND *HOWL OF THE WEREWOLF*

Interior and cover art for the first new *Fighting Fantasy* book in ten years. How did it feel to be be 'back in the saddle' so-to-speak?
It was kind of fun... and the fee had finally improved! Good to test out doing the internal line drawings digitally.

Two versions of the cover art for this book have been seen. What was wrong with the first version that led to the need for a second?
I think I did one with more smoke from the dragon's hooter, and one with less smoke, and they could take their pick.

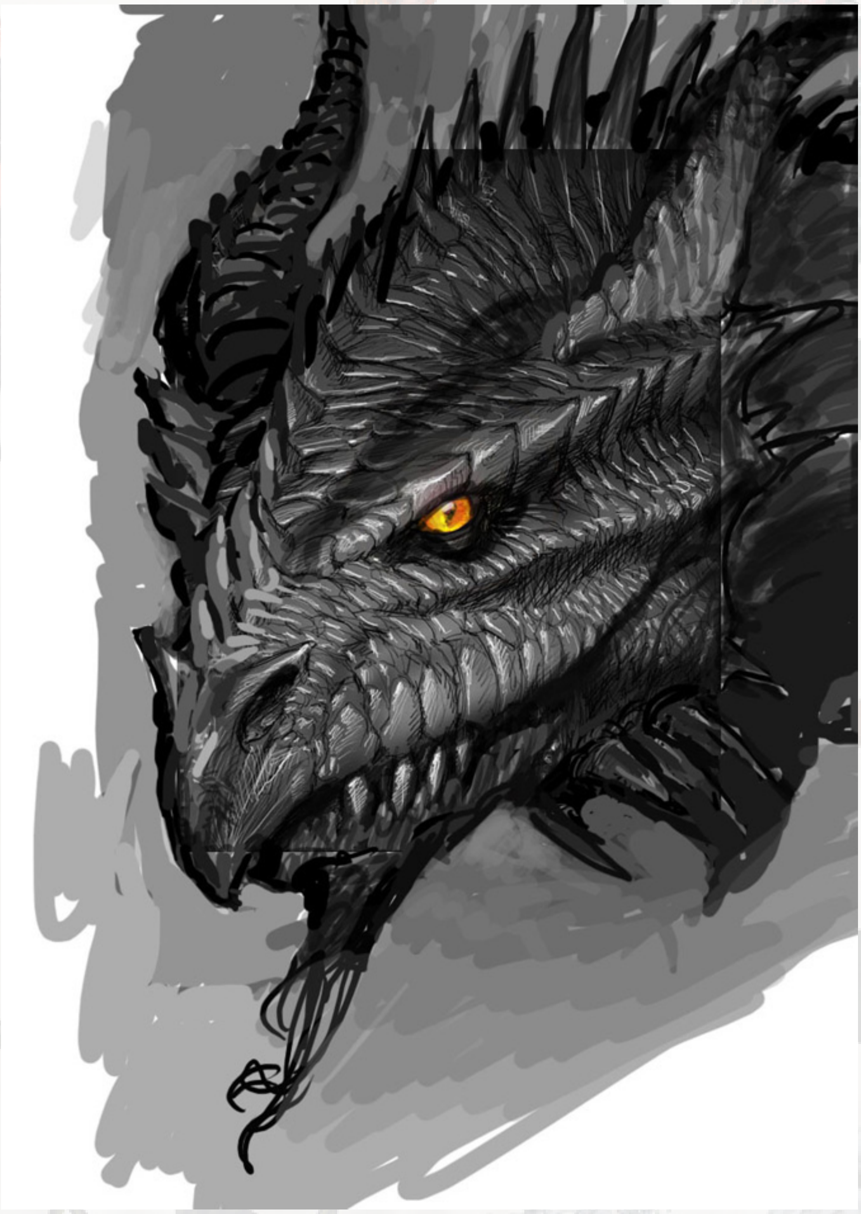
The Wizard Books reproduction of interior art on the gamebooks has proven quite dark compared to the Puffin editions. Does this prove a challenge when working with fine detail?
I haven't noticed it being a big problem. The reprints of earlier interiors can look pretty muddy, as in some cases they're from scans of the pages of the earlier books!

Have there been any times where you think you failed to nail what you wanted with your published art? Conversely, which pieces of art you've produced do you feel hit the mark spot on?
I think I probably fail with nearly all my pictures! I might have a particular something in mind for a picture that I fail to accomplish, and it can be frustrating just not having the skill or wherewithal to achieve what I wanted... but then, hopefully, that failure spurs me on to keep trying and make the next picture work better. There's usually something that bugs me about every picture so I'm never totally happy, but my view of stuff changes with time and something I didn't like when I did it improves with age and vice-versa. Some things stand the test of time and I can bring myself to look at them!

The cover art for *Howl of the Werewolf* has been used elsewhere since in non-*Fighting Fantasy* publications. Is there any sort of moratorium on how long your art remains exclusively for *Fighting Fantasy* before you are allowed to sell the use of it for other works?
Not officially, as far as I'm aware! Just a respectful amount of time after first use, it wouldn't be right to see the artwork used elsewhere too soon unless promoting the *Fighting Fantasy* book it's from.

Until this last decade your output has been primarily fantasy in orientation. Is this a preference or simply at matter you having been 'pegged' as a fantasy artist and being offered such work more often than non-fantasy?
It's been my preference up to a point, fantasy stuff is usually fun to do and if the brief calls for generic stuff it's rarely a stretch as I know the genre pretty well. I'm always more interested in slightly "darker" subjects and lean towards horror whenever I get the chance.

You've written some books on digital art. How easy do think digital painting would be for someone who's never dabbled in it before?
No different, really, from someone dabbling using traditional stuff. A slight learning curve, maybe, to get a feel for it, but most painting software is pretty intuitive.



Do you think digital art will completely replaced traditional methods over time?
I think the two will continue to coexist to some extent. Some artists will always want to retain their use of traditional tools and materials if only for the simple pleasure of enjoying their use, and I should think there'll always be a place for the simplicity of a real pencil on real paper – as I mentioned earlier I'm happy at the moment doing everything digitally.

What prompted you to pen a book about digital art? Are there plans for further volumes in the future?
Well, I was asked to! The opportunity was there so I gave it a go. The two books I did about digital art techniques seem to have proven useful to lots of people, I've had many nice emails from readers over the years. They're still in print and probably still have some value although they may have dated a little as the software moves on. Right now no further plans for books of that sort.

TAKE 2 – *THE WARLOCK OF FIRETOP MOUNTAIN* AND *NIGHT OF THE NECROMANCER*

So far, most of the planned "Series 2" editions of the *Fighting Fantasy* books reuse your art from the 2002 run. Why was the art for *Warlock of Firetop Mountain* different?
Mostly because its composition wouldn't fit within the circular space in the new cover design – plus I never liked that artwork to begin with!

Does the smaller space for the art present a challenge as an artist?
Not really, y'just have to come up with something that fits.

Are there any titles you would like another crack art rather than simply reprinting your 2002 run art?
I guess so! A couple mentioned earlier!

On your website you note that the cover art didn't come out as you had wished. What was wrong with the produced covers?
The colours came out wrong. I wasn't too bothered but the publisher was very apologetic, and we've done a slightly tweaked version for the next print run.

You've got a picture book of your own devising due out with Scholastic for Christmas this year. What can you tell us about how this project came to be and what the story is all about?
A very kind editor at Scholastic suggested that it was high time I did a book all of my own, and I realised she was right! Already having a working relationship with them, I was lucky in that they offered me a publishing deal on whatever bright idea I'd like to come up with. It won't now be released in time for Christmas this year because it's taken me too long to write it! But having got the story knocked into shape, finally, I'm now illustrating and it should be out next year. I won't say too much but it's a surreal dream adventure, very strange and spooky, involving light and its absence. Anyway, it's large format, fully illustrated in colour throughout... so I've got my work cut out.

Your site indicates work in other media such as film and television, with even sketches from a graphic novel. Have you ever aspired to pen a comic book?
I've done various bits of comic stuff, not much. I've enjoyed the small amount I've done, it's fun to play with the cinematic aspects of sequential stuff, but for me it's a bit too intensive and takes a lot to sustain – but there are various ideas floating around so who knows.

You illustrated a new *Fighting Fantasy* title this year in *Night of the Necromancer*. Do you look forward to illustrating the gamebooks?
I guess so! The *Fighting Fantasy* stuff is very familiar territory, so it's a no-brainer really -- they're quite fun to do.

Fighting Fantazine *would again like to thank Martin McKenna for taking the time to answer the questions put to him by the magazine. Meanwhile, readers can keep abreast of Martin's future printed art and browse a gallery of past art at his website: martinmckenna.net/* **FF**

prey of the hunter

by Kieran Coghlan
Illustrated by Peter Adamson

Welcome to the Future

The year is 2192. In less than two centuries, Earth Confederation has gone from a blip in the galaxy to one of its two major powers. YOU are a decorated starfighter pilot who has been assigned command of a squadron in order to capture a dangerous criminal, a renegade from the warlike Trawg. You will need to use all your skill and ingenuity to survive this adventure.

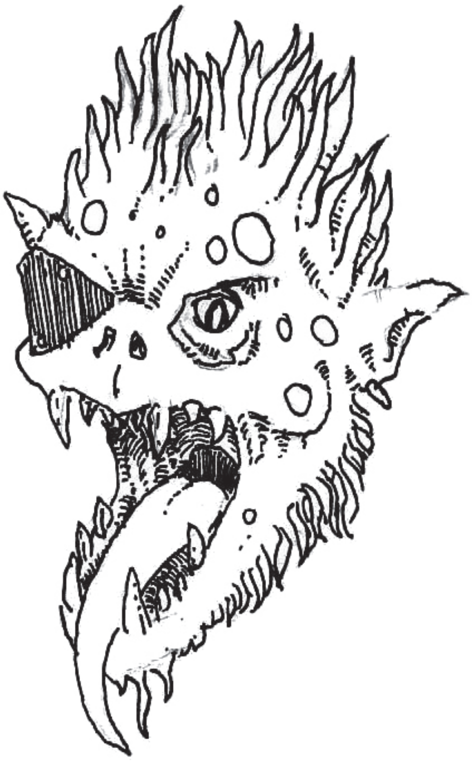
The Galactic Powers

Earth Confederation

In 2192, Earth is united and has spread across the stars. Their high population and eagerness to learn and explore has made humans one of the most powerful races in the galaxy.

The Lyanian Empire

Lyanians look like tall humans, but more powerfully built and with a fleshy frill on top of their hairless heads. The Lyanians arrived recently from the far reaches of the galaxy and plan to conquer the rest of it. Currently their power is being checked by the Confederation. They are cold, ruthless and deadly efficient.



The Trawg

The Trawg are an inward looking warrior race. Millennia ago they occupied a vast empire, but civil war led to the collapse of their power and now they occupy a small corner of space which they defend uncompromisingly. They are huge creatures resembling spiny gorillas. They have a strict code of honour and persecute any that choose not to adhere to it.

The League of Neutrals

A loosely affiliated group of peoples who have united in order to protect themselves from the growing power of the Confederation and the Lyanian empire. The most important member races are:

Silazians

Silazians are 6 foot tall reptilian creatures with orange scales. They are the most populous of the Neutral races but their unambitious and disorganized nature means they have little power. They are usually to be found working as space pirates and smugglers.

Mercanii

The Mercanii are squat creatures with shiny purple skins. Their military force is negligible, instead they rely on trade and excellent relations with other races to enhance their power. They are always ready to make a deal providing its in their favour to do so.

Aquanarians

The military backbone of the Neutrals, the frog-like Aquanrians were once the most powerful force in the galaxy, but they suffered a crippling defeat at the hands of the Confederation in 2145. They have a severe dislike of humans and hope to recapture their glory by playing humans and Lyanians against one another.

D’laré

The D’laré Matriarchy is made up of 1000 females to every 1 male. The females are tall, elegant and insect-like with a no-nonsense attitude. Males are forbidden to leave the D’laré homeworld and few outsiders have seen them. Males have no rights and although treated well, they have no freedom and have no duties other than breeding with the females.

Timeline

9th May 2027 - The European Union forms the united state of Europe

12th September 2028 - The US economy is saved from the brink of collapse by a massive loan from Europe.

1st April 2029 - China, now the most powerful state in the world, unites with neighbouring countries to form the Eastern Bloc.

26th October 2029 - Japan invaded by Eastern Bloc forces. The country asks for aid from the US and Europe.

1st November 2029 - The US and Europe form the Western Bloc and join forces with Japan to fight off the Eastern Bloc forces.

14th December 2029 - The scale of the war increases as battle is fought between the two blocs on several fronts on the globe. World War 3 has begun.

8th August 2031 - After a series of crushing defeats, the Western Bloc is in retreat when Earth has first contact with an alien species – the Mercanii. A Mercani force attacks Beijing – the Eastern Bloc is forced to retreat to deal with this new menace.

3rd October 2031 - The Eastern Bloc has suffered crippling losses. Its few surviving leaders make a secret deal with Western Bloc leaders to form a united force to fight the alien invaders.

27th July 2032 - Despite their vastly inferior technology, the humans' guerrilla tactics and sheer numbers mean they finally manage to drive the Mercani force off the face of Earth - World Independence Day declared.

31st August 2032 - Earth government is officially united across the globe overseen by a president of the east and one of the west. The new government is named the Earth Confederation.

14th September 2032 - Rather than make another attempt at conquering Earth, the Mercani government agrees to trade its technology with the Confederation in exchange for some of earth's natural minerals. Earth develops new weaponry and spaceships that can venture deeper into space at faster-than-light speed.

2038 - 2062 - Earth explores deep space and colonises a few worlds occupied by undeveloped beings.

November 2062 - The Confederation's attempt at conquering a planet in Trawg space leads to a brutal defeat at the hands of the warrior race.

2063 - 2117 - Despite protests back on Earth, Confederation

prey of the hunter adventure sheet

SKILL =

INITIAL SKILL =

STAMINA =

INITIAL STAMINA =

LUCK =

INITIAL LUCK =

TRAIL

VILLAINY

CREDITS

POSSESSIONS

RESIDENCE

CODEWORDS AND NOTES

forces continue Earth's expansion into space. Many humans leave earth to settle newly colonized planets.

12th June 2117 - A dispute over a planet rich in minerals leads to the Earth-Aquanarian War.

20th March 2145 - Despite their superior technology, the dwindling numbers of Aquanarians mean the once powerful empire is forced to surrender to the Confederation. The Aquanarians retreat further into their home sector.

2168 - The powerful Lyanian empire arrives from the far side of the galaxy, colonizing planets in its wake. Its attempts to encroach into Confederation space are beaten back however. A new Cold War begins between the Confederation and Lyanians.

4th February 2170 - The League of Neutrals is formed to act as a buffer between the Confederation and Lyanian Empire.

Your Abilities

Your *Adventure Sheet* will be used for keeping track of your attributes.

Roll one die. Add 6 to the result. Enter this total as your SKILL score. SKILL represents your fighting ability and dexterity.

Roll two dice. Add 12 to the result. Enter this total as your STAMINA score.STAMINA represents your health and toughness. If your STAMINA ever reaches 0 or lower, you have died.

Roll one die. Add 6 to the result. Enter this total as your LUCK score.

These three statistics may go up and down throughout your adventure, but they may never exceed your *Initial* scores.

Villainy

As a member of the Confederation military, you are expected to behave well and obey the law. But you may find this hard in your desperate situation. Your VILLAINY score starts at 0 but will rise if you act in an unscrupulous manner.

Trail

Your TRAIL score is a track of how close your enemy is to tracking you down. Your TRAIL score stars at 0, but will rise if you draw attention to yourself. At times you may be asked to *Test your Trail* score. To do this, roll 2 dice. If you roll less than your TRAIL score, you have been found, otherwise you are safe.

Battles

Hand-to-hand Combat

At times you will be presented with an enemy's SKILL and STAMINA scores and have to do battle with them. To do this, follow the procedure below:

1. Combat is simultaneous. Hand-to-hand fighting is a series of clashes in which one combatant will do damage to the other.
2. Roll 2 dice and add the result to your opponent's SKILL score. The total is your opponent's Attack Strength for that round.
3. Roll 2 dice and add the result to your SKILL score. The total is your Attack Strength for that round.
4. Whoever has the lower Attack Strength has been hit and loses 2 STAMINA points. If the two scores are equal, both attacks miss. The Attack Round is now over.
5. If your opponent has reached 0 STAMINA, you have won. If you have reached 0 STAMINA you are dead. Otherwise, return to step 2 and start a new Attack Round, unless told otherwise by the text.

If fighting more than one opponent you will either fight them one at a time in which case you fight as normal and move on to the next opponent once you have finished with the current one, or you must fight them all at once. To do this, each adversary will make a separate attack on you in the course of each Attack Round, but you can choose which one to fight. Attack your chosen target as in a normal battle. Against any additional opponents you roll the dice for your Attack Strength in the normal way; if your Attack Strength is greater than your opponent's, you will not inflict any damage; you can regard it as if you have parried an incoming blow. If your Attack Strength is lower than your adversary's however, you will be wounded in the normal way. The text will tell you which procedure to use.

Shooting Combat

If you acquire a laser pistol you may find yourself in a shooting combat. You will be presented with your enemy's SKILL and STAMINA and conduct combat as follows:

1. *Test your Skill*. If you are successful, you have hit your opponent. Roll one die and subtract the result from their STAMINA. Otherwise, you have missed.
2. If your opponent is still alive, they may return fire. *Test their Skill*. If they are successful, you have been hit. Roll one die and subtract the result from your STAMINA. Otherwise your opponent has missed you.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 until either one of you is dead or the text tells you otherwise.
4. If you find yourself fighting multiple opponents, you must choose who you fire at in step 1, but all surviving opponents will return fire on you in step 2.

Luck

At times you may be asked to *Test your Luck*. To do this, roll 2 dice. If you roll less than or equal to your LUCK score, you are Lucky. If you roll higher you are Unlucky and must pay the consequences. Either way subtract 1 from your LUCK score every time you *Test your Luck*.

Using Luck in Combat

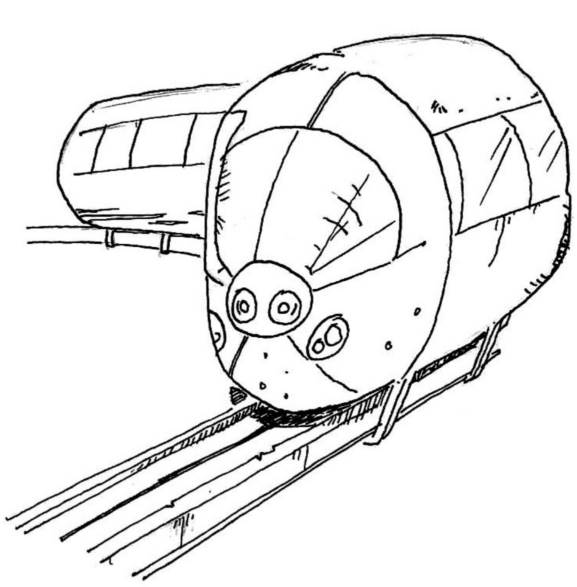
If you have just wounded an opponent in hand-to-hand combat you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky, you have inflicted a severe wound; deduct an extra 2 points from your opponent's STAMINA score. However, if you are Unlucky, your blow only scratches your opponent, and you deduct only 1 point from your opponent's STAMINA.

Whenever you yourself are wounded in hand-to-hand combat, you may *Test your Luck* to try to minimise the wound. If you are Lucky, your opponent's blow only grazes you; deduct only 1 point from your STAMINA. If you are Unlucky, your wound is a serious one and you must deduct 1 extra STAMINA point. Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your LUCK score each time you *Test your Luck*.

More About Your Attributes

Skill

You may also be asked to *Test your Skill*. To do this, roll 2 dice. If you roll less than your SKILL score, you have been successful. If you roll equal to or greater than you SKILL you have been unsuccessful.



BACKGROUND

You sit in your Confederation fighter watching the hulk of a Trawg Gaiacrusher drifting through space before you, its engines inert.

'Did we blow its thrusters?' Tseng asks over the intercom from his own fighter on your left.

'Possible,' you reply. Though extremely unlikely, you think to yourself. Gaiacrushers are covered in heavy armour though they have a weak point - a small part of the fuel transmitter is slightly exposed. The chances of hitting it with stray laser fire are minute but you admit it is possible.

'Come in Omoz,' you repeat for the fourth time, sending out a message to the Trawg ship. Again no reply.

'Possible he's dead from a gas explosion or something?' pipes in Roddick, flying off to your right.

You don't buy it – in one small burst of fire you managed to hit the fuel transmitter and cause an internal explosion? No, something else is going on here. Omoz is a renegade from the Trawg, outcast for murder and sadism. He has been travelling Confederation space, indulging in his usual vices and you were appointed leader of a crack team sent to place him under arrest. It hasn't been easy. You pinned down his ship off Lexus-5, but the resulting dogfight did not go well. Only you, Tseng and Roddick were left before Omoz retreated and you have been pursuing him since.

'Hell, I'm going to investigate,' snaps Tseng.

'No! Wait!' you shout, but it is too late. As Tseng's fighter nears the Gaiacrusher, it suddenly explodes into actions, its thrusters engaging as it spins round and sends a volley of laser shots into the hull of Tseng's craft. The fighter spins out of control before exploding

'Noooo!' screams Roddick, as she flies towards the Trawg ship, lasers flaring. She manages to get a few good hits before a missile from the ship catches her port engine, blowing her ship to smithereens.

There's no way you can fight off a Gaiacrusher single-handedly. You turn and retreat, hoping to reach aid before Omoz can shoot you down. It is a vain hope. A shot thuds into the back of your thrusters, causing the whole ship to jolt. As your fighter's velocity decreases, your head spins and you slip into unconsciousness.

***

When you open your eyes again you are no longer strapped into the seat of your fighter. Instead you are sitting in the seat of an escape pod. The door of the pod is open and standing just beyond is the one-eyed figure of Omoz with a wide grin on his face.

'Welcome aboard,' he chuckles in surprisingly good English. 'Though I'm afraid to say you won't be staying long.'

'Why haven't you killed me?' you manage.

'Where would be the fun in that?' he replies with a shrug. 'Instead I suggest we play a game.'

'A game?'

'Yes, a game.' He gives an almost amicable smile. 'We are currently orbiting Karthran-6, not the friendliest planet in the galaxy I think you'll agree. I'm going to drop you down there in the pod. You've got a few hours' grace before I land the ship and go looking for you. Find a way off the planet and I'll let you go free. However, if I catch you,' his grin becomes impossibly wide. 'I kill you.'

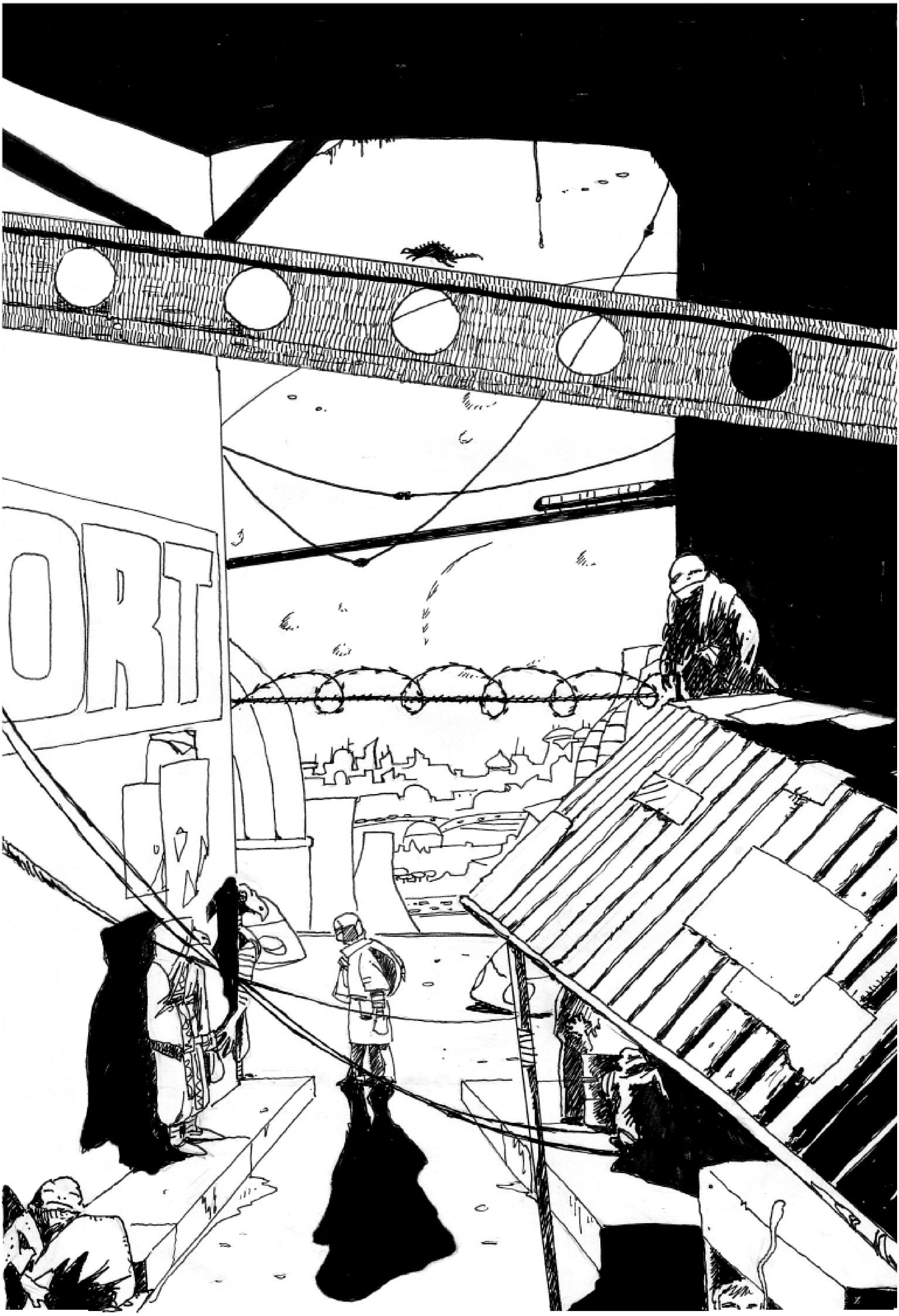
'And the alternative to your game?' you try.
'I kill you now. A lot less fun though.'

You sigh. 'Very well, Omoz. You've got a deal.'

'Excellent,' the eye-patched Trawg responds. 'Have fun.'

With that, he slams the door of the pod closed and seals the airlock. With a hiss of air, the pod is flung from the side of the Gaiacrusher and plunges towards the purplish speck that is Karthtran-6, one of the most lawless planets in Confederation space.

Turn to paragraph **1**.


ORT

1

As the escape pod hurtles through the dark void towards Karthran-6, you think of what you know of the backwater planet. Though it is technically part of Confederation space, the authorities back on Earth have little interest in it. Its once-profitable titanium mining industry has all but collapsed with the discovery that a tantalum alloy made for a cheaper alternative to titanium when it came to building the hulls of Confederation star cruisers. As a result, jobs on the planet are badly paid and many of the humans have turned to crime or left the planet, leaving the way clear for ne'er-do-wells from the Neutral planets to flock in. Schnell, the current Administrator, is said to lurk in his offices, waiting for his relief and leaving Karthran-6 to run itself. You are unlikely to receive little help from him.

Your pod jolts as the reverse thrusters kick in. You must be approaching the planet. Theoretically the thrusters should slow the pod sufficiently to stop you from smashing into the planet's surface. But there's always the chance that you'll collide with something on the way down. The pod shakes violently and begins to get uncomfortably warm. You grit your teeth and assume the crash position.

With a bone-jarring thump your pod crashes to the planet's surface. Shakily, you rise to your feet and wipe the blood from your nose. You hit the release switch and the door of the pod slides open to reveal a very angry and very hairy man. 'My house!' he screams. 'You crushed my house! You big clumsy catastrophe from the skies! Where am I to live now?'

'Sorry about that,' you mutter, rubbing the back of your neck as you climb out of the pod and take a look round. Sure enough your pod seems to have crashed into a small metal shack. It's lucky no-one was in it at the time.

'"Sorry?" "Sorry" is it? How's "sorry" going to help me?' the hairy man yells. 'You'd better have some credits to go with your apolo—" He stops speaking and stares in alarm at the lion insignia on your uniform – the symbol of the Confederation forces. Without another word, the man turns and flees down a nearby dark alleyway.

'Thank the stars for that,' you mutter to yourself as you survey your surroundings. You seem to have landed in the midst of Karthran-6's one and only city. Simple shacks and lean-tos rest against dilapidated warehouses and grimy high rise apartment blocks. A rusted monorail threads between the buildings – a primitive form of public transport in this day and age. Several eyes, both alien and human watch you from the smoky alleys, but none approaches you. Perhaps they are put off by your uniform. Speaking of which, Omoz will have little trouble finding you if you walk around in your uniform for all to see. Hurriedly you pull the jacket off, revealing the white T-shirt you always wear underneath. You are about to place it in a nearby trash incinerator when a thought strikes you: a Confederation uniform could be valuable to some. Perhaps you could sell it on to raise some much needed funds? If this idea appeals to you, turn to **67**. Otherwise, you place it in the incinerator. Turn to **193**.

2

Test your Trail score. If you have been caught, turn to **109**. If not, you awaken the next morning with a sore back, but otherwise rested (restore up to 3 STAMINA points). Have you raised 350 credits yet? If so, turn to **94**. Otherwise, it looks like you'll have to do some more work. If you have the codeword *grind* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **83**. If you have the codeword *wiseguy* recorded instead, turn to **70**.

3

You make your way to the city centre, passing a brawling group of Silazians and stepping over the gutted corpse of a Mercani en-route. The sky is beginning to brighten with the onset of noon when you reach the city hall. It is a rather grand building in the early 22nd Century style though it sticks out like a sore thumb amongst the grimy buildings that surround it. You stride into the building and up to a snooty looking woman with huge red hair. 'I need to see the Administrator as a matter of urgency,' you demand.

'Take a number and wait your turn,' she replies, nose kept firmly in the air.

Sighing, you grab a number from the kiosk (number 83 apparently) and sit with a group of bored looking men and women. As you wait for what seems like an age, several people stop and look at you oddly, but none approaches you (add 1 to your TRAIL score). Just as you are thinking of giving up and leaving, your number is called and you are shown into Administrator Schnell's office.

Schnell is a horribly fat man in an ill-fitting Confederation uniform. A few straggly wisps of blond hair have been scraped over his balding pate in an unconvincing comb over. He scratches his sweaty jowls as you explain your situation to him. 'I'd love to help,' he yawns. 'But I can't do anything in the immediate future. Best I can offer you is transport to Callus-9 in three weeks' time.'

'Three weeks' time?!' you gape. 'I could be dead by then. Don't you have an emergency transport I could use?'

'I hate to break this to you,' replies Schnell coolly, 'but one soldier stuck in a backwater planet is hardly an emergency. I'll get some of my boys to watch out for this Omoz. You'll be fine. Here's some cash to tide you over.' He hands you 15 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*).

'Thanks for nothing,' you mutter as you leave the city hall, resolved to try the spaceport. Turn to **19**.

4

You make your way through the city's narrow backstreets asking the rough types you pass if they know a place where people can make specialised and somewhat illegal transactions. Add 1 to your TRAIL score and then *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **95**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **26**.

5

You rush off, leaving your brief accomplice to handle things on his own. Record the laser pistol on your adventure sheet. However, your actions may have made you some enemies in the criminal underworld. Record the codeword *nemesis* on your *Adventure Sheet*. Without looking back, you leave the crowded spaceport. Turn to **175**.

6

Trawgs are many things but they are not fast. You manage to outdistance him running down the corridor, but where on the ship will you make for now? You could try the bridge (turn to **44**), the docking bay (turn to **172**), or the canteen (turn to **189**). Decide quickly because Omoz's heavy footfalls are getting ever closer!

7

You spot a hulking red-haired man sitting in a dark corner. You saunter over to him and ask if he is Cornelius.

'And what if I am?' he rasps.

'I have something you might be interested in purchasing: some circuit boards.'

He takes a long swig of his green beer and looks you up and down critically. 'Well, you're too scruffy to be the law,' he admits. 'Meet me out back in two minutes.'

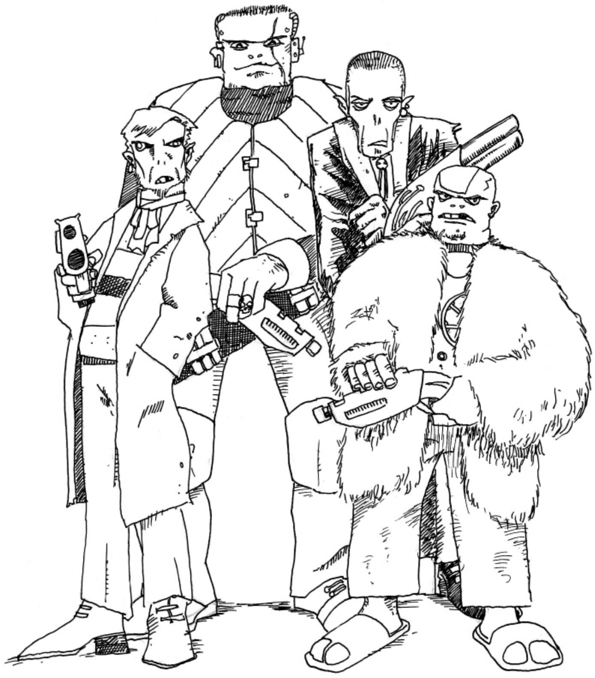
He then rises from his seat and strides out the back door. You wait a couple of minutes, resisting the urge to finish his beer, and then head out to the alleyway behind the bar. Cornelius is waiting expectantly. 'Let's see what you got then,' he grunts.

You show him the circuit boards and he casts a discerning eye upon them. 'This is pretty good stuff,' he comments, clearly surprised. 'Where did you manage to get them? No matter I suppose – 150 credits for the lot.'

You gladly make the exchange and are just pocketing the credits (add them to your *Adventure Sheet*) when you hear approaching footsteps from the alleyway behind you. You turn to see four heavies, all armed with laser pistols standing before you.

'Ya think ya can rip off Zeppo Zardon and get away with it?' barks one of them and with a sickening lurch in you stomach you recognise Al, the man you robbed.

'You robbed Zardon?' cries Cornelius aghast. He sets the circuit boards on the ground. 'Tell Zardon I meant no disrespect,' he says hurriedly before turning tail and fleeing down the alleyway. You wish you could follow him but you'd be gunned down before you took two steps. With a sigh of resignation you pull forth your laser pistol as the four ruffians do the same.



	SKILL	STAMINA
AL	8	7
FREDDO	6	7
LARRY THE CRUSHER	7	5
RINGO	6	8

If you prevail in this deadly shooting combat, turn to **181**.

8

You are shown in to see Zardon. 'Ah it's you,' he grunts. 'I have a job that would suit you down to the ground.'

Roll a die to see what job Zardon gives you and tick the adjacent box. If you have already ticked the box, roll again until you get a result with an empty box next to it. If you roll:

1	☐	Turn to **64**.
2	☐	Turn to **40**.
3	☐	Turn to **165**.
4	☐	Turn to **98**.
5	☐	Turn to **18**.
6	☐	Turn to **190**.

9

Zardon doesn't seem overly concerned when you report your failure. 'No point you getting arrested,' he says amiably. 'We'll try again another night.'

You are dismissed and told to report in again tomorrow. Turn to **39**.

10

Eventually, you emerge spattered with dust into a stable part of the mines. Behind you, you can hear the tunnel collapsing completely – there are no screams for help issuing from it now.

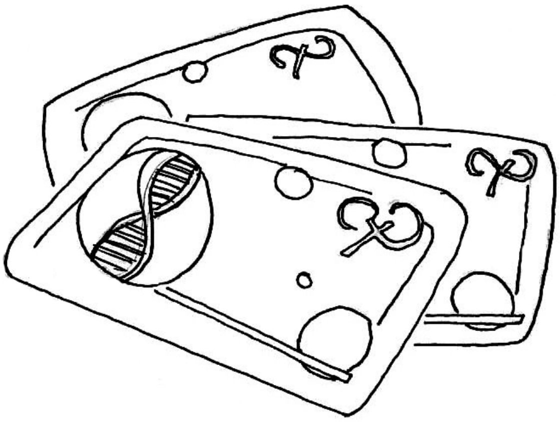
The foreman appears and sighs. 'This'll be no end of paperwork,' he grumbles.

'Paperwork?' bursts Finnegan. 'There's people dead down there!'

'That'll be even more paperwork,' whines the foreman, clearly feeling sorry for himself.

He instructs the lot of you to clear out the tunnel. You find no survivors. Then the foreman sends you all home. 'I'll need to find some more staff,' he laments as he pays you your 45 credits.

Shaking your head at his callousness, you leave the mine and head back into the city. Turn to **39**.



11

Delete the codeword *wiseguy* from your *Adventure Sheet* and add the codeword *loner*. You make your way across town to the mines which are built into some tall purplish mountains at the edge of the city. You find a Mercani foreman sitting at a paper strewn desk by the mine entrance and ask him if you can have a job.

'Oh yes?' he grunts. 'You got any papers?'

'No,' you reply disappointedly. Maybe getting a job here won't be as easy as you hoped.

'Perfect,' he chuckles. 'That means I don't have to pay you as much. You'll get forty-five credits a day. Follow me'

He leads you down a long crumbling tunnel, eventually emerging into a slightly wider area where several miners are at work, extracting ore from the rock with portable extractors. The foreman introduces you to a short fat miner with a huge brown beard. 'Finnegan here will show you the ropes.'

Finnegan is only too glad to help and hands you a portable extractor and shows you how to use it. 'Back in the day they used to use huge machines for this,' he remarks cheerfully. 'But they found it's cheaper to get a bunch of people, pay them slave labour wages and get them to use these portable extractors. Cheaper to replace us than robots and machinery after all.'

You chat away to Finnegan over the relentless rumble of the extractors. He reveals he was actually born and raised on Earth itself. You ask him why he left. 'I had my reasons,' he answers mysteriously. You feel it best not to push him further.

Eventually the day comes to an end and you are paid 45 credits for your efforts (add them to your *Adventure Sheet*). You wave goodbye to Finnegan and leave the mines, heading back into the city. Record the codeword *grind* on your *Adventure Sheet* before turning to **39**.

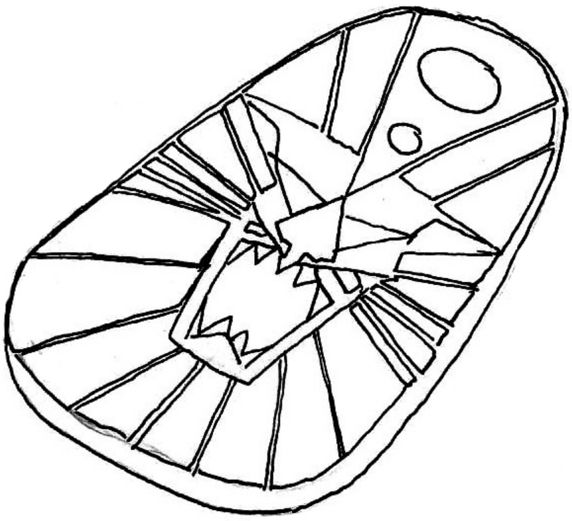
12

The man continues on his way and is soon out of sight. Maybe he wasn't the watchman after all? After a few minutes your comrades in villainy show up carrying several crates.

'Let's beat it,' says Al.

You return to Zardon who is pleased with your work and pays you 75 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). 'Continue like this and you'll go far,' he remarks to you.

Not sure whether to be chuffed or ashamed, you take your leave. Turn to **39**.



13

You are enveloped by the buzzing blue ball of energy and turned to atoms within milliseconds.

'And so death comes to all who hope,' intones Despair solemnly.

'Whatever,' replies Omoz with a shrug.

14

A quick search of the D'laré's body reveals 95 credits. You can also take her laser pistol if you wish (add either or both to your *Adventure Sheet*). Despite their expensive suits, her two victims have nothing on them – no money, no IDs – nothing. Very odd. Not wishing to stick around here too long, you make your way out of the alleyway and head on towards Zardon's hideout. Turn to **140**.

15

You and Finnegan are working alone in a small tunnel, Finnegan telling you of a few tales from back on Earth. He is just recalling about his time working on the giant lizard experimentation laboratory in Tokyo when two Silazians walk past you both. The two of them seem to be in hysterics and it seems all they can do to stop themselves falling over.

'What's up with them?' you ask Finnegan once the two hysterical aliens have gone round the corner.

'There's ethessal gas coming out of the tunnel they're working on. It makes people very happy.'

'Ethessal gas!' you start. 'But that can cause brain damage.'

'I think a lot of workers are prepared to take that risk,' says Finnegan, clearly not very concerned.

Will you report this potentially dangerous gas leak to the foreman (turn to **82**), or will you just forget about it and continue working (add 1 to your VILLAINY score then turn to **129**)?

16

You wake up somewhat refreshed (restore 2 STAMINA points). Someone appears to be knocking on your cabin door. You crawl out of bed and press the switch to open the door. The door slides open – and a blood drenched crew member collapses into the room! You prop him up and ask what happened, but he just gargles his own blood before dying. Will you quickly lock your door (turn to **198**), or enter the corridor to investigate (turn to **188**)?

17

You knock over a loose piece of masonry which makes a loud clatter. The Aquanarian swings round, laser pistol in hand. 'Just how I like humans,' he hisses. 'Alone and stupid.'

You pull out your own laser pistol.

AQUANARIAN SKILL 9 STAMINA 9

If you kill him, you stoop over his body and cut a Z in his cheek – this should let the Aquanarians know to keep off Zardon's turf. Searching the corpse, you find 10 credits, some sort of high explosive grenade and a laser pistol. Take what you wish and then return to Zardon by turning to **160**.

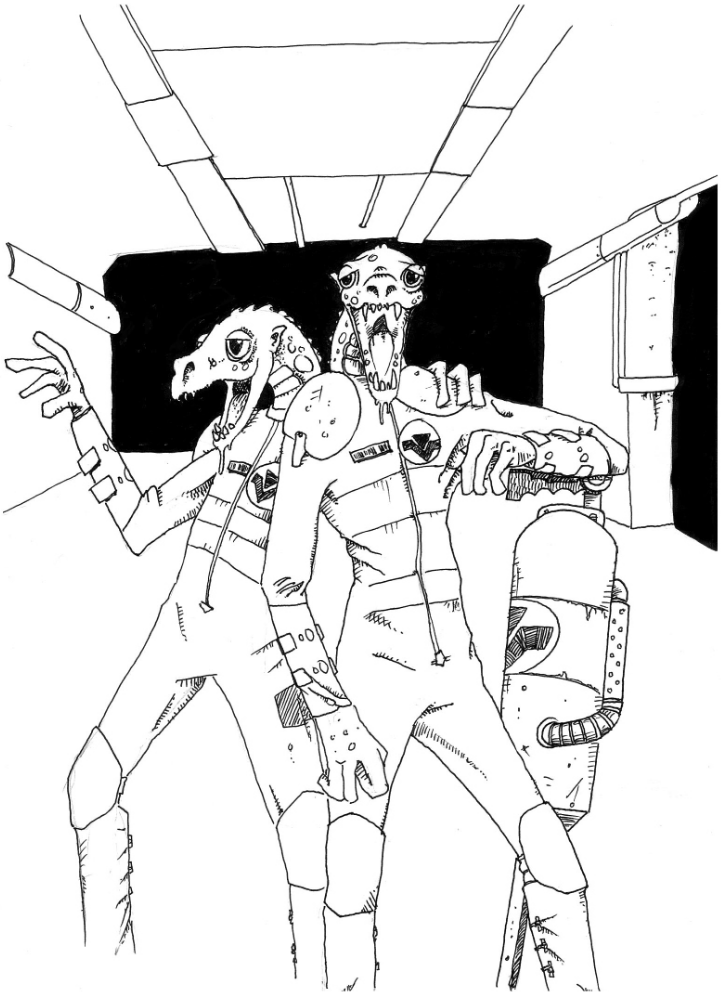
18

'That fat fool Administrator Schnell has acquired a new *Felux 3000*.'

'That's a nice hover car,' you respond dutifully.

'Indeed. And you're going to make it my car. Go to Schnell's private garage tonight. I've bribed one of the security guards to leave the side door unlocked.'

That evening you head into town and checking that no-one is watching, you open the unlocked side door and enter Schnell's garage. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **107**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **128**.



19

You head through the littered streets, keeping your head down as you brush past rough vagabonds and turning a deaf ear to the pleas of the beggars who call these stinking alleyways home. Eventually you reach the once magnificent Karthran spaceport. Once considered state-of-the-art, it now seems boxy and ugly to your modern sensibilities and the whole structure could do with a new lick of paint. Shaking your head, you step through the automatic doors.

A huge crowd of humans and aliens bustle along inside. You head towards one of the quieter terminals and look around for a likely vessel to take you off this godforsaken planet. A Silazian wearing a leather eye patch spots you looking at a loss and beckons you over. 'You need some help, friend?' he rasps.

Deciding you'll have to put your trust in someone, you ask him if there's any pilots around who can get you off-planet fast and cheap.

'Try Parnal Kyras the Mercani. Flies the *Purple Lady*,' he replies before directing you to the vessel. You thank the helpful Silazian. If you wish you can slip him 10 credits to keep quiet about you (deduct this amount from your *Adventure Sheet* if you choose this option), otherwise you must add 1 to your TRAIL score. Either way, turn to **80**.

20

As you pull yourself through the window, there is a blast of energy behind you and a laser beam rips across your back (lose 8 STAMINA points). If you survive, you drop to the ground and race away from your hideout. You turn round to see Omoz at your window laughing uproariously. You duck down a side-street and run full pelt, desperate to get away. Eventually you pause to catch your breath. You spot a seeming deserted shed and head towards it. It should make a decent hiding place. You make yourself a makeshift bed, but are too terrified of Omoz showing up again to get any sleep.

Eventually the sun rises and your sleepless night is at an end (lose 2 STAMINA points for lack of sleep). You take a furtive glance out the window and, satisfied that Omoz isn't in the vicinity you prepare for another day fraught with danger. Have you raised 350 credits yet? If so, turn to **94**. Otherwise, it looks like you'll have to do some more work. If you have the codeword *grind* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **83**. If you have the codeword *wiseguy* recorded instead, turn to **70**.

21

You are shocked out of your daydreaming when a familiar figure gets on the train and sits nearby. It's that Mercani vagabond who stole your things while you were wrestling his accomplice. You sit next to him and he turns to look at you disinterestedly before his eyes widen in recognition. 'You!' he breathes.

With an amicable smile you demand he return your things. He stammers that he hasn't got them on him, but he'll give you 80 credits if you'll leave him alone. Will you accept this offer (turn to **124**), or will you demand he return your possessions (turn to **90**)?

22

As you touch one of the crewman's shoulders, he slumps to the table. He is dead! Omoz must have put them in these poses to trick you! An ominous beeping sounds and the table the two dead crewmen are sitting at explodes. You dive for cover, but the brunt of the blast sends you flying hard into the wall (lose 10 STAMINA points). If you survive, turn to **56**.

23

You blow the cheeky Silazian's head off and the others gape in horror. Freddo bursts into an uproarious laugh. 'Man, you're hardcore. Al was right about you.' He turns to the cowering Silazians. 'See what happens when you screw with Zeppo Zardon?' he barks.

They nod, before scuttling off whimpering. Still laughing, Freddo leads you back to Zardon's base and give the crime lord a glowing review of your efforts.

'You did me a great service,' Zardon rumbles. 'Take this.'

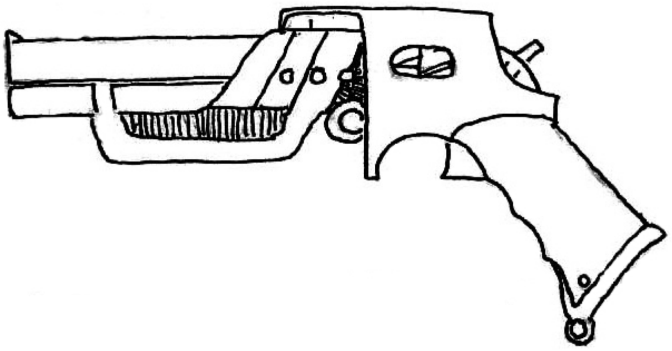
He hands you 50 credits which you pocket (add them to your *Adventure Sheet*). 'I can see you having a bright future here. I can never have too many stone cold killers working for me.'

His ensemble burst into laughter and you give a half-hearted smile. 'Report back tomorrow,' continues Zardon. 'I have other tasks for you.'

You nod and leave. Add 3 to your VILLAINY score and record the codeword *wiseguy* on your *Adventure Sheet* before turning to **120**.

24

'Very wise,' says Freddo with a smile. 'Take care of yourself.' With that he stands up and gets off the train at the next stop. You hope that this is the last you have seen of Zardon and his men. Erase the codeword *loner* from your *Adventure Sheet*, then turn to **185**.



25

Schnell paces up and down in his office, flabbergasted by your tale. 'So to protect yourself from one alien you buried several miners?' he asks finally.

'They were already dead from the gas,' you explain.

'How do you know? Did you check every single one of them?'

'No. But I doubt any could have survived.'

'And even if that is the case,' counters Schnell desperately. 'It will take years to get the mine operational again. That was Karthran-6's only commercial enterprise. You may have ruined this planet completely.'

'I apologise. It was not my intention to destroy the whole mine. Perhaps if your men were more competent, Omoz could have been clapped in irons as soon as he landed on the planet.'

'I think you yourself have shown Omoz was not the easiest person to capture,' he snaps back.

Wiping the sweat from his brow, he picks up his phone and yells down it. 'Get me a ship for Melos-8 immediately... No, I don't care what it'll cost. I just want this crazy spacer off my planet now.'

He slams the phone down and turns to you. 'The military on Melos-8 will have to deal with you. You're their problem now.'

Turn to **106**.

26

You feel a tap on your shoulder and turn round to see two scowling Aquanarians. 'You spying on us, human?' growls one.

'Of course,' replies his companion. 'Humans are always up to something.'

'I'm just trying to sell this jacket,' you reply, eager to avoid a fight.

'That a Confederation jacket, ain't it?' barks the first. 'You military?'

'My uncle was killed by Confederation scum like you,' snaps the second.

'Hey come on guys!' you plead. 'The war ended fifty years ago!'

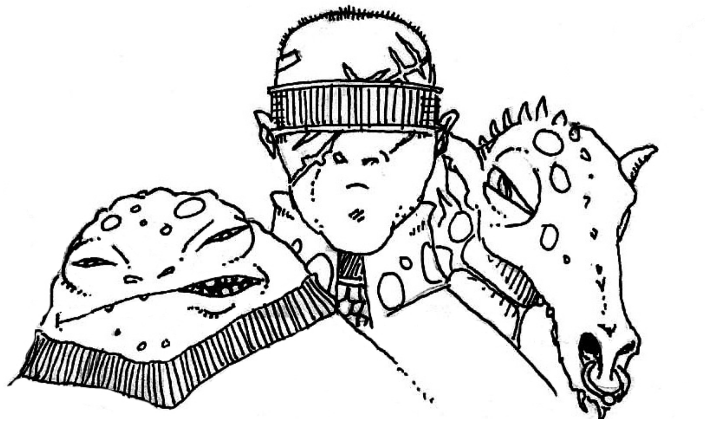
'Pah! What's fifty years to an Aquanarian?' spit's the first.

'Enough talk!' roars the other. 'Time to squish us a human.'

Resignedly, you raise your fists and prepare to fight.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First AQUANARIAN	8	6
Second AQUANARIAN	7	7

Fight them one at time. If you win, turn to **59**.



27

As you all charge on the building, snipers by the upper windows send out a spray of laser fire (roll 1 die and subtract the result from your STAMINA). This burst of fire isn't enough to stop you however and as you race to the building several gang members race out to meet you. Fight two of them one at a time with your fists.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First RED CRUISER	7	5
Second RED CRUISER	6	7

If you defeat them, turn to **133**.

28

The Red Cruiser tumbles from the window, dead even before he hits the ground. Catching your breath, you hear gunfire and screams all around you – it seems Zardon's men have attacked the Red Cruisers head on. You race round to the front of the building, but by then it is already over. The Red Cruisers are lying dead in a heap in front of their base's entrance and Zardon's men are whooping jubilantly and firing their laser pistols in the air.

'Well done boss,' says Freddo, as you approach rubbing your still tender arm. 'Who can be bothered with subtlety anyway?'

You grunt a noncommittal response before giving the order for Zardon's unruly thugs to return with you to the base. Turn to **169**.

29

As you are scouring the bar, the front door is thrown open with a crash and several uniformed officers burst in.

'Alright, this is a raid!' yells the burly sergeant.

The bar empties as the clientele race for the rusted back door. Not wishing to be caught with stolen goods you follow suit, barging your way through the crowd as you hear the overenthusiastic policemen cracking heads behind you. You burst through the doorway to the alleyway behind the bar. With the police in hot pursuit you try to lose them in the warren of alleyways. Which way will you go?

Second left, third right, first right?	Turn to **162**.
First right, second right, third left?	Turn to 72.
First left, third left, second right?	Turn to **192**.

30

You pull the gas mask over your face and relax as breathing comes naturally once more. You race over to Finnegan but it is too late for him. His face is gaunt and a horrible yellow fluid is pouring from his mouth. Tears in your eyes, you make your way through the tunnels, looking for help but all you find are corpses – workers you have befriended over the past few days, now all dead.

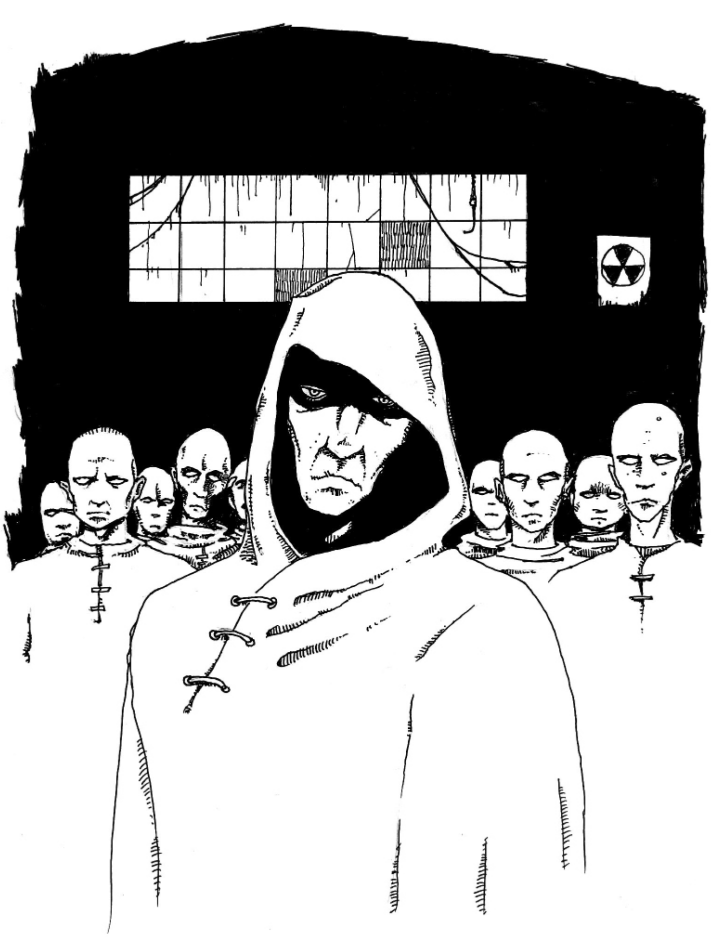
You are startled out of your melancholy by the show plod of footfalls coming from the tunnel ahead of you. A shape forms from the darkness. A huge, brutal, one-eyed shape – Omoz! So he is responsible for all this! He quickens his pace as he spots you, the poisonous gas doesn't seem to have any effect on his Trawg constitution. If you have a high explosive grenade and wish to throw it, turn to **66**. Otherwise, turn to **42**.

31

You hand Al back the laser pistol and he hands you 30 credits in return (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). 'Fair payment for a job well done,' he grins. 'Now we'd best get outta here fast.'

As you walk through the bustling spaceport, Al tells you about his boss: a shady underworld figure named Zeppo Zardon. 'He's always looking for fresh blood,' Al continues. 'You should go over to his headquarters if you're lookin' some easy money.'

Al gives you directions to Zardon's hideout. Note the codeword *godfather* on your *Adventure Sheet*. Eventually, you leave the spaceport and Al waves goodbye declaring that Zardon wants the circuit boards lickety-split. Turn to **175**.



32

It's a fair walk to the mines and walking through the streets on Karthran-6 is never safe at any time. With your head down, you walk through the litter-strewn streets at a prompt pace. If you have the codeword *nemesis* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, *Test your Luck*. If you are Unlucky, turn to **143**. If you are Lucky or if you do not have the codeword, read on.

Roll one die and tick the box next to your result before turning to the appropriate section. If you have already ticked the box next to your result, roll again.

If you roll:

1 or 2	☐	Turn to **156**.
3 or 4	☐	Turn to **74**.
5 or 6	☐	Turn to **45**.

If all three boxes have already been ticked, roll a die. If you roll 1 or 2, turn to **51**. If you roll 3-6, turn to **102**.

33

The man is totally unsuspecting and you gun him down easily (add 2 to your VILLAINY score). Unfortunately, the blast from your laser pistol has altered the real watchmen and two hard faced men race towards you, laser pistols drawn. You yell an alarm to your fellows as you return fire.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First WATCHMAN	8	12
Second WATCHMAN	9	7

After two rounds you manage to escape into the dark streets. You rejoin your cronies and return to Zardon empty handed. 'I thought you said this one was a good lookout!' bellows the crime boss at Al.

'Sorry boss,' Al murmurs.

'See that you don't screw up tomorrow,' Zardon growls at you.

You nod and leave. Turn to **39**.

34

Your blows seem to have little effect on the acolytes despite the blackened eyes and bloody noses you dish out. It's as if they don't even care about pain anymore. With the sheer weight of their numbers they force you to the ground where they beat you relentlessly in horrible silence. Once they disperse again all that is left is your bloody corpse.

35

'That's great!' he says. 'Follow me.'

He leads you to a small terminal where a heavily overweight man is unloading some crates from a small freighter. 'Hold this,' he says, handing you the laser pistol. 'Anyone shows up, you know what to do.'

He sneaks up behind the fat man and knocks him out with a whack to the back of the neck. Add 1 VILLAINY point for being involved in this wrongdoing. If you wish to keep watch, turn to **153**. If you'd rather run off with the laser pistol, turn to **5**.

36

Test your Trail score. If you have been caught, turn to **186**. If not, you awake from a dreamless sleep (restore up to 4 STAMINA points for your rest). Have you raised 350 credits yet? If so, turn to **94**. Otherwise, it looks like you'll have to do some more work. If you have the codeword *grind* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **83**. If you have the codeword *wiseguy* recorded instead, turn to **70**.

37

Your mysterious guide leads you down some dark tunnels underneath an old bomb shelter, a remnant from the Aquanarian War. Eventually the tunnel emerges into a cavernous room deep underground. A man in a hooded green robe is standing in the centre surrounded by gormless looking men and women hanging on his every word.

'My friends,' he says in a deep, melancholic voice. 'We live in a time when mankind is shackled by the restrictions of Hope. Mankind spreads its seed hoping to achieve an immortality it can never enjoy. People reach out for gods in the off-chance that there is something out there and their lives will not end. Planets are conquered in the hope of power but achieving only complications. Money is hoarded only to be redistributed again once the hoarder dies. Only by taking the logical route – by embracing Despair, fearing nothing, caring not when your misery will end, are you truly free.'

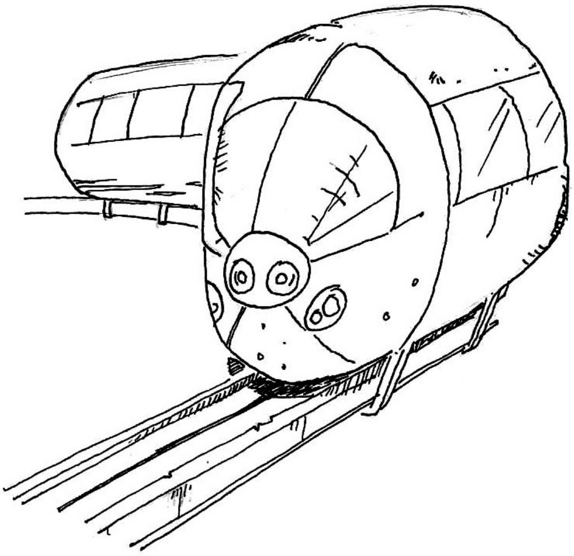
He stops talking as he sees you. 'A newcomer, eh?' he continues. 'I sense you are running from something in the vain hope that your survival will mean something in the great scheme of things. Accept your life is nothing – that all lives are nothing – and stop running. There is no point prolonging the agony and purposelessness of life.'

He reaches out his hand. 'Come, let Despair touch your forehead.'

His worshippers watch you expectantly. Will you allow him to touch your forehead (turn to **179**), or will you refuse (turn to **173**)?

38

You ferret through the scattered papers and scorch-marked drawers in the office, trying to hold your breath from the putrid stench of gore as you do so. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **108**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **52**.



39

You're feeling tired after the day's trials. Time to get some rest. What is your current residence?

A squat?	Turn to **54**.
A cheap apartment?	Turn to **116**.
An expensive apartment?	Turn to **69**.

40

Zardon instructs you to get some protection money from a bar in the neighbourhood. 'Show them who's boss,' he murmurs.

You head down to the bar and throw it open to find a heavyset barman wiping the tables.

'We're closed, pal!' he says grumpily.

You draw your laser pistol in response. 'You owe my employer money, my friend. Zeppo Zardon is not a patient man.'

The man turns white as a sheet. 'I have your money here,' he stammers. 'Tell Zardon I was just on my way to give it to him.'

He hands you 120 credits with shaking hands (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*).

'Very wise,' you say wryly, worried that you're maybe taking too much pleasure in this (add 1 to your VILLAINY score).

As you leave the bar, a thought occurs to you. 120 credits is a lot of money. Maybe you should keep it for yourself – you may be able to get off planet before Zardon can track you down. If you wish to risk it, turn to **149**. If you'd rather not risk Zardon's ire, turn to **197**.

41

You manage to barge your way through the slow-witted acolytes and race down the tunnels to the surface. You have no idea what Despair's plans were but you're glad you didn't get involved. You head onward to the mines. Turn to **102**.

42

Omoz whips out a vaporising rifle from behind his back and smiles with manic glee. 'I'm glad you brought your gas mask. I like to look into my victim's eyes before they die!

He fires a violet beam. You have no chance to dodge before the beam burns into you, leaving only a purplish gas which mingles with the poison before dissipating completely.

43

'Don't run!' screams Despair as you turn tail. 'What is there worth running for anyway?'

You take no notice. The sight of Omoz has had a curative effect on your feelings of despair. Now all you want to do is live! As you near the exit, Omoz fires his massive weapon and a buzzing blue ball of energy hurtles towards you. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **112**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **13**.

44

You reach the bridge and see Captain Parnal sitting at the controls, his back to you as he gazes out the ship's view screen at the onrushing stars.

'Captain!' you shout, grabbing his shoulder. 'There's a killer on the ship. He's...'

You cut yourself short. Parnal is dead, his face twisted into a ghastly approximation of a grin. As you back away from this horrific sight, there is a whoosh as the door to the bridge closes behind you. A recorded voice comes on: 'Hello, my friend,' says Omoz. 'I guess you have discovered the fate of the good captain. Still you needn't end up like him. Look under his seat.'

You pull out a box from under Parnal's seat. It displays a sequence of numbers and has a key pad attached. The sequence goes: *1 – 2 – 7 – 32 – ?*

'All you have to do,' continues the voice. 'Is type in the next number in the sequence. Get it right and the door will open and you will be free to leave to be killed by me in some other way. Get it wrong and the box will explode. And when I say "explode" I mean "explode." Your Earth ants will have trouble seeing your remains. And answer quickly because if you don't guess in thirty seconds the box explodes anyway. Aren't I a devil?'

If you can work out the next number in the sequence, turn to that section now. If you can't work it out or the section you turn to makes no sense, turn to **145**.

45

A crowd is gathering round a huge man, bald-headed and bare chested, his body covered in rippling muscles. 'Which of you wimps is prepared to take on me, the Mountain of Muscle!' he bellows. 'Fifty credits if you can wrestle me to the ground!'

None of the crowd seem too eager to take him up on his offer. A Mercani nudges you. 'You look strong. I bet you could take him,' he says enthusiastically. 'I'll hold your stuff for you if you like.'

If you wish to take him up on his offer and challenge the Mountain of Muscle, turn to **136**. Otherwise, you push past the crowd and continue on to the mines. Turn to **102**.

46

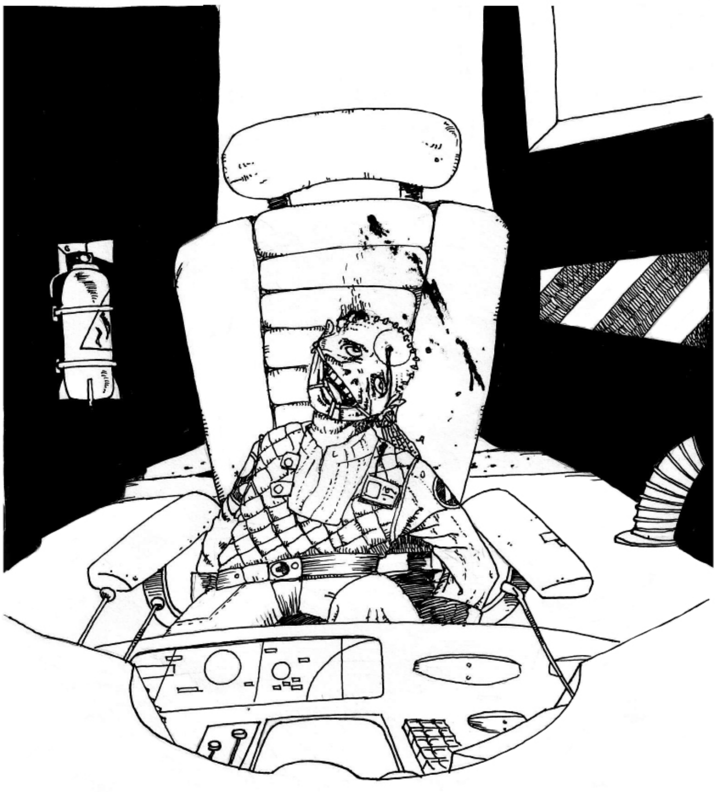
You race back and grab her hand, but you can't pull her out with all the weight of the rocks on top of her. You hurriedly heave the rocks away, but the rumbling goes louder and the ceiling collapses on top of you. Your bones are crushed to smithereens but at least you died a hero.

47

The pipe groans and then comes free from the wall, leaving you to fall painfully on your arm (lose 1 SKILL and 2 STAMINA points). What's worse is that the sound of your crash has alerted a Red Cruiser gunman who rushes to the window to fire down of you. You draw your laser pistol and fire back.

RED CRUISER	SKILL 10	STAMINA 8

If you win, turn to **28**.



48

You arrive back at Zardon's base, surprised to see the front door wide open with no doorman in sight. Suspicious, you pull out your laser pistol and creep into the building. As soon as you step inside, your nostrils are assaulted by a hideous stench. Resisting the urge to vomit, you continue on but nothing prepares you for the sight in Zardon's audience room: the crime boss and all his cronies have been nailed to the walls, their guts slit open with their entrails spilling out onto the floor. A message has been scrawled in blood on Zardon's desk: *Your gangster friends made for poor bodyguards it seems. Be seeing you soon.*

There is no doubt in your mind that Omoz is the cause of this carnage. A chill creeps all over you. Will you leave as soon as possible (turn to **194**), or will you see what you can ransack from the bloody room first (turn to **38**)? If you have not done so already, you can open Zardon's case – he'll have no more use for it after all (turn to **148**).

49

You help yourself to the robber's laser pistol and to 37 credits (add them to your *Adventure Sheet*). Unbeknownst to you however, you have been observed by some of the robber's cronies. You may have made yourself some dangerous enemies. Record the codeword *nemesis* and add 1 to your TRAIL score. Eager to avoid the attentions of the spaceport's security bots, you hurriedly exit through the port's automatic doors. Turn to **175**.

50

‘Yeah, you D’Laré would do well to give your men folk some power,’ you mock. ‘Maybe then people might give a rat’s ass about your planet.’

Fl’zal snarls and pulls forth a laser pistol. Finnegan dives to the side but you are not quick enough. Her shot hits you just above your right eye (lose 3 STAMINA points and 1 SKILL point). You tumble backwards and blackout.

You awaken to find yourself in the foreman’s office. Both the foreman and Finnegan are looking down at you, in annoyance and concern respectively. You touch your tender forehead to find it has been banished.

‘Glad to see you made it,’ says Finnegan. ‘Don’t worry about Fl’zal. She ran off as soon as she realized what she’d done. I doubt we’ll be seeing her again.’

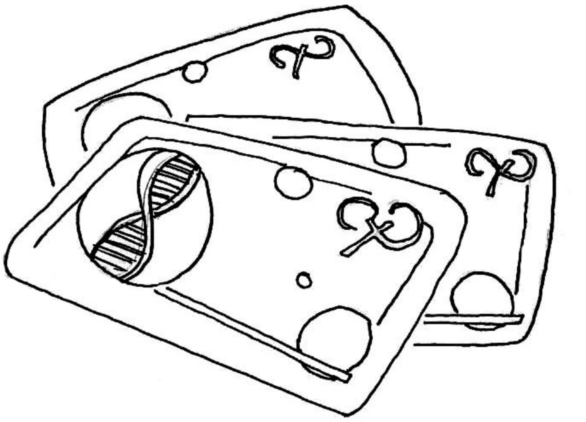
‘Which means I’ve lost a perfectly good worker,’ complains the foreman. ‘You humans are so primitive. Why on earth our government ever thought it a good idea to sell you our technology is beyond me.’

‘Sorry,’ you mumble, staggering to your feet.

‘Oh you will be,’ continues the foreman. ‘The two of you can go home with no pay. And don’t let anything like this happen again.’

He storms out. Finnegan shrugs and you both head out of the mine. ‘Don’t worry about him,’ consoles Finnegan. ‘He’ll have his knickers in a twist about something else tomorrow anyway.’

You wave goodbye to Finnegan. You still feel pretty bad though. As a Confederation soldier you really should have protected the peace. Add 1 to your VILLAINY score then turn to **39**.



51

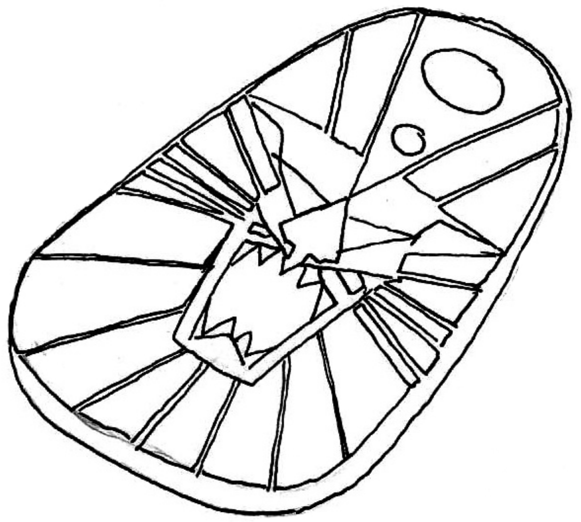
Two Aquanarians armed with knives spring out of a shadowy alleyway to attack you. There is no time to draw a laser pistol before they are on you. Fight them both at once.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First AQUANARIAN	6	7
Second AQUANARIAN	7	5

If you defeat them, a quick search of their bodies reveals only 12 credits. As you pocket these (add them to your *Adventure Sheet*) a few passers-by stop and stare at you, but no-one says anything (add 1 to your TRAIL score). You carry on to the mines. Turn to **102**.

52

As you brush a bundle of papers aside you hear an ominous beeping. You pull out a beeping metal box with Omoz’s smiling face on it. A red light is blinking where his good eye should be. Quickly, you cast the box aside but you don’t have time to escape before it explodes taking you and half the building with it.



53

The patrons of the bar turn to look in disgust as you enter. The Aquanarian looks up from his drink and sighs. ‘When will Zardon realise he has no power here? Let’s send him a message boys!’

Before you can do anything, a hulking Silazian jumps on you and forces you to the ground where you are pummelled and kicked into unconsciousness.

When you awaken you find yourself lying in an alley outside the bar (lose half your current STAMINA score, rounding fractions down). Battered and bedraggled, you return to Zardon to report your failure. Turn to **164**.

54

You head through the rough area of the city towards your squat. Figures watch you surreptitiously from the shadows. Roll one die. If you roll a 1, turn to **122**. Otherwise, you stop to buy some food from a smelly old woman (deduct 1 credit from your *Adventure Sheet*) before reaching your abode. You tuck into the unappetizing food before settling into an uncomfortable sleep. Turn to **2**.

55

You stride over to him, measured confidence in every stride. ‘Do your worst,’ you say dispassionately. ‘Death can be no worse than life anyway.’

Omoz looks disgusted. ‘I expected more fire from you,’ he barks. ‘Still I’ll do my best to accommodate your wishes.’

He grabs you by the neck and crushes your throat. At least you do not suffer in death.

56

As you pull yourself to your feet, you spot Omoz entering the canteen by the far door. ‘Enjoy my little surprise?’ he cackles.

You race away from him, hoping to find a hiding place in the docking bay. Turn to **172**.

57

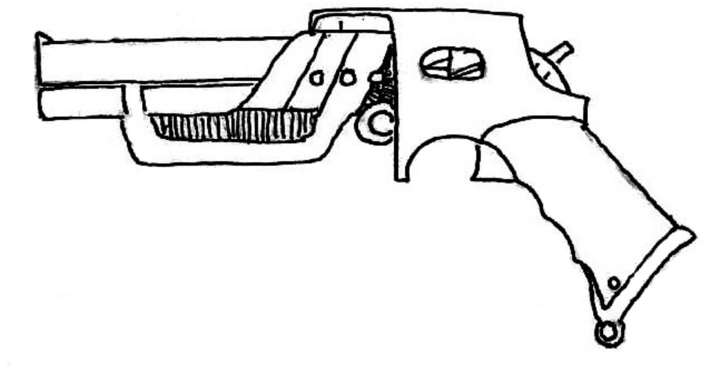
The gunman curses as you dash away but makes no move to stop you. You fight your way through the throng to the spaceport exit and take your leave of the building. Turn to **175**.

58

With some pretty slick driving you manage to lose the police cars in the warren of narrow streets (although you do succeed in knocking over a stack of Naraski chicken coops as you do so). Once you’re sure that the heat is off, you turn towards Zardon’s place. The doorman draws in his breath as you take the hover car into the garage at the rear of the hideout. As you climb out, Zardon comes waddling towards you, a broad smile on his face. ‘You did great kid,’ he says. ‘Here ya go.’

He hands you 100 credits which you pocket gratefully (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). ‘Come back tomorrow,’ yells the crime boss, as you take your leave. ‘You and me – we’re a great team!’

Somewhat worried that he may be right, you leave the hideout. Turn to **39**.



59

You bend down to search the bodies of the two Aquanarians. As you do so, a man with a blond Mohawk and broad grin saunters over to you to give his congratulations. ‘Less of those frog-faced fools hanging about the better,’ he chuckles. You mutter something noncommittal in response, not really happy to be endorsing the bad blood between the Aquanarians and humans. The man shrugs and continues on his way.

You find 27 credits on their bodies – not much but every little helps (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). If you wish to continue asking around for a place to sell your jacket, turn to **95**. Otherwise, turn to **193**.

60

Luckily your armour protects you from the worst of the flames but you still lose 5 STAMINA points. You barge past the Trawg and flee down the dimly lit corridor. Turn to **6**.

61

You collect your portable extractor from the foreman and join Finnegan and the rest of the miners in the tunnels, ready for a day of tough manual labour. If you have the codeword *paragon* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **184**. Otherwise, roll one die and tick the box next to your result before turning to the appropriate section. If you have already ticked the box next to your result, roll again. If you roll:

1	☐	Turn to **79**.
2	☐	Turn to **15**.
3	☐	Turn to **166**.
4	☐	Turn to **87**.
5	☐	Turn to **142**.
6	☐	Turn to **105**.

If all boxes have already been ticked, turn to **97**.

62

‘Ya think I’m going to let ya tell the security bots what I’m up to?’ he yells. You’ve got a fight on your hands but at least he can’t use his laser pistol in these close quarters.

ROBBER	SKILL 8	STAMINA 7

If you beat him, turn to **49**.

63

You are thrown into the city jail with little ceremony. ‘You’ll get a trial when we’re good an’ ready,’ growls a pock marked guard.

You spend the next few days shivering in your cold damp cell and living off the thin gruel the guards bring you. One day your cell guard announces that you have a visitor. Your look of incomprehension turns to horror as your visitor enters the cell: it is Omoz with a huge grin on his bestial face! The guard closes the door behind him. ‘Seems someone has caught my prey for me,’ laughs Omoz. ‘They certainly deserve that fifty credit bribe I gave them to make sure we’re not disturbed.’

You scream but no-one comes to your rescue. Your last sight is of Omoz striding towards you, claws outstretched.

64

‘I want you to pick up a case from a Mercani dealer at the spaceport this afternoon. Bring it back here. And for your own sake, don’t open it!’

You nod and spend the rest of the morning playing cards with Al and Freddo (you win 3 credits! Add them to your *Adventure Sheet*) before leaving the hideout in the afternoon. Rather than walk all the way to the spaceport you head to a nearby monorail terminal. Once the rusted train arrives, you climb aboard and sink into the battered plastic seating.

A small, squirming man sits next to you. ‘Hey, you look like a friendly face,’ he gibbers nervously. ‘Not many friendly faces here. A lot of bad, bad people here. I’ve only been here a week and I’ve been mugged twice. How does anyone survive out here?’

‘It pays to be armed,’ you respond, patting the laser pistol hanging at your belt.

'Hey where'd you get one of those?' the nervous man asks excitedly. 'You wouldn't consider selling it would you?'

If you wish, you can sell the laser pistol for 60 credits (If you do so, add these to your *Adventure Sheet* and cross off the pistol). Eventually the tram reaches the spaceport. You nod goodbye to the nervous man and disembark. Turn to **91**.

65

You walk down the rubbish-strewn alley to find two men in well-tailored suits lying face down in a pool of blood. Standing over them is a D'laré with her laser pistol pointing at you. 'You should keep your nose out of things that don't concern you, human,' she threatens in the high-pitched voice of her people.

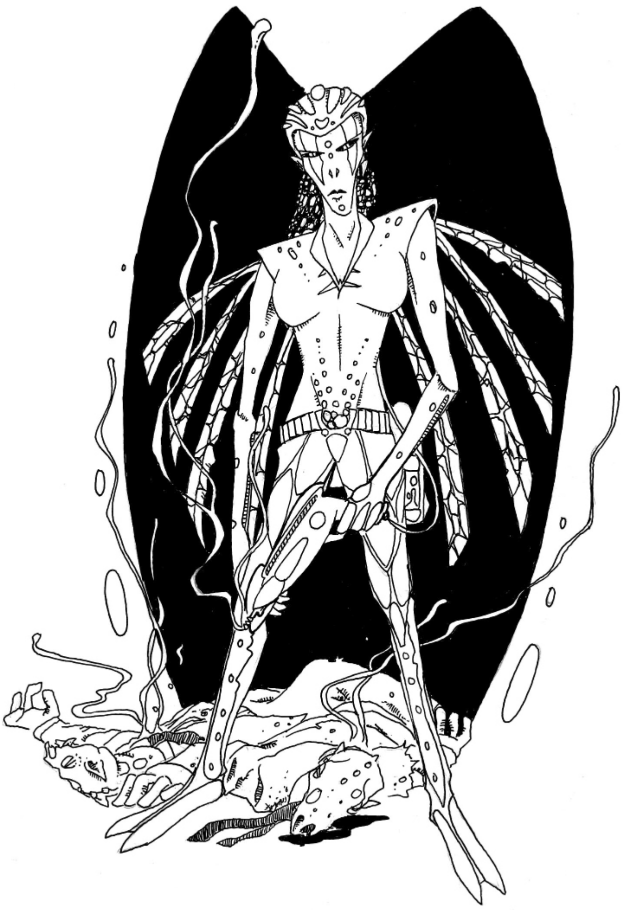
If you have a laser pistol, turn to **100**. If not, turn to **88**.

66

The grenade lands at Omoz's feet and before he even has a chance to scream it blows him to pieces. Unfortunately the tunnel he was standing in also begins to collapse and the ominous rumbling coming from all around you suggests the rest of the mine is set to follow suit. You dash along the winding tunnels to the exit, but will you make it in time? *Test your Skill*. If you succeed, turn to **167**. Otherwise, turn to **126**.

67

There are two ways you could go about this. You could head down one of the city's narrow streets and offer to sell it to a passer-by (turn to **81** to try this). Alternatively, you could make a few discreet enquiries and try to find a black market where you could potentially make more credits on the sale (turn to **4** if you wish to attempt this).



68

Freddo leads you along narrow alleyways, passing various cutpurses and cutthroats without a second glance as he tells you about this "Silazian problem." 'Bunch of these alien scum have been running around this neighbourhood acting like they own it. Don't realize that this is an Earther planet. They're hiding out in the sewers and are robbing some of the good people who pay for Zardon to protect them.'

He hands you a laser pistol (record it on your *Adventure Sheet*) before throwing open a manhole cover and leading you into the cold, smelly darkness of the sewers. Eventually he spots a few skulking Silazians and brings them down with a few well-placed shots to their legs. He kicks away their weapons and looks at you expectantly. 'Show 'em who runs this planet,' he says.

One of the Silaizians spits in your face. What will you do?

Shoot him?	Turn to **23**.
Rough him up?	Turn to **177**.
Threaten him?	Turn to **103**.

69

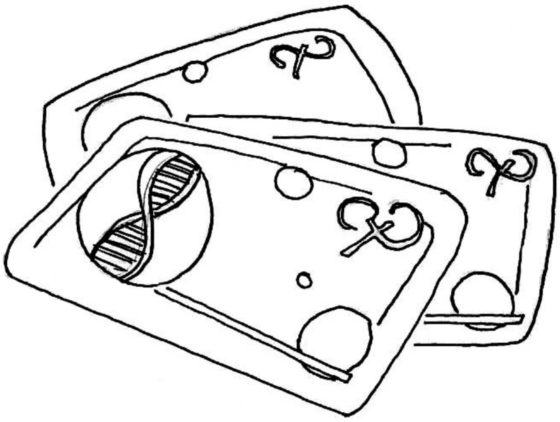
You return to the *White Arms* apartment block. The Mercani landlord seems delighted to see you, rubbing his hands greedily as he ushers to your room. You hand him over your 25 credits (deduct these from your *Adventure Sheet*) and he races off to get a meal sent up to you. Soon you are tucking into succulent Cathodo bird. Tired after your heavy meal, you crawl into bed. Turn to **144**.

70

You guess you had best report in to Zardon, but how long can you allow yourself to take orders from such a man? Will you go see him (turn to **131**)? Or will you risk angering him by trying to find work in the titanium mines instead (turn to **11**)?

71

You call out to your accomplice then turn tail and run. You race down the corridor and head towards the spaceport entrance, hoping to lose the security bot in the crowd. Your plan seems to work and you make it to the exit without any sign of the robot or your criminal friend. It's possible your face was seen before you got away though. Add 1 to your TRAIL score. Still, at least you can keep the laser pistol. Turn to **175**.



72

You turn a corner... only to be confronted with a dead-end. You turn round to face several police officers closing in on you, wide grins on all their faces. There is no possible way you could fight your way out of this so you promptly surrender. You are quickly cuffed and dragged roughly away. Turn to **63**.

73

You find a disused workshop near the edge of the city. You chase away a few rats and throw out the decomposing - something – that they were chewing on. You find a few old sheets you can use as a makeshift bed. It's not the nicest place you've ever stayed at, but it will do. Before settling down, you leave your new residence and buy some just past their sell by-date rations from a toothless old woman (cross off 1 credit from your *Adventure Sheet*). You then head back to the workshop, eat your rations and get some rest. Note down on your *Adventure Sheet* that your RESIDENCE is a squat, then turn to **2**.

74

You spot a man being beaten up by a few shaven headed youths. You charge towards them and they soon scarper, not so eager to take on someone their own size. You help their victim up. Rather than thank you, he turns to you with a look of boredom. 'There was no need to do that, stranger,' he drawls. 'I was resigned to my fate.'

'Whatever,' you reply. You have better things to do than talk to ungrateful weirdos.

As you turn to go he grabs your arm in a vice-like grip. 'Perhaps you expected more of me? I see from your eyes that you are still shackled by hope, enslaved to the belief that life rewards those who try. Come with me. I shall show you the ways of Despair.'

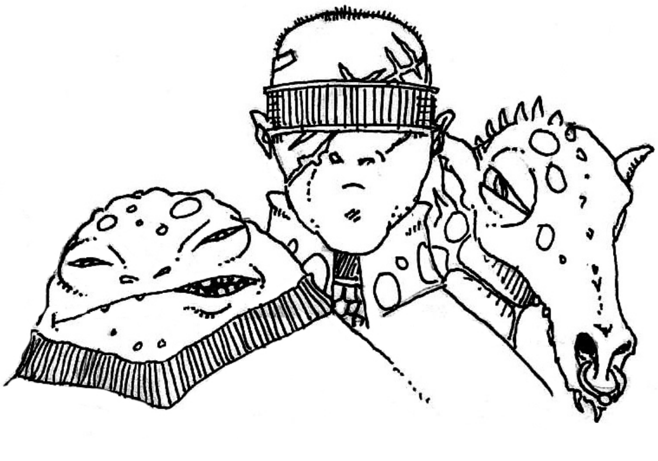
If you follow this strange man, turn to **37**. If you'd rather shake him off and continue towards the mines, turn to **102**.

75

You sink to your knees, letting out a hysterical laugh. You've done it! Omoz is no more. You are safe and the galaxy is rid of a terrible menace. Composing yourself, you wander round the ship looking for any survivors. You find all the crew have been murdered, many left in sadistic poses. Saddened that you unwittingly caused the deaths of so many, you head for the bridge and pilot the ship to Melos-8, home to a sizeable Confederation garrison. You can't help but wonder what they'll make of your report. Turn to **106**.

76

You follow the directions Al gave you to the seediest area of the city. You pass several rough types who glower at you threateningly though none dare attack you. After all, you must be capable indeed to brave these streets alone. You are just stooping over to pick up a solitary credit from the street (hey, every little bit helps so add it to your *Adventure Sheet*!) when you hear raised voices coming from a shadowy alleyway. The voices get louder before being cut off by laser fire. Then there is silence. If you wish to investigate, turn to **65**. Otherwise, you head on to Zardon's hideout. Turn to **140**.



77

The Mountain of Muscle is down, but there's no sign of the Mercani conman. Cursing, you make your way through the urban labyrinth to the titanium mines. Turn to **102**.

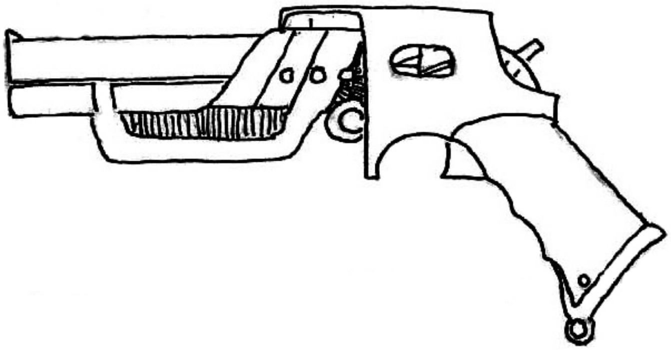
78

You open the cabin door to reveal one of the crewmen hanging by his neck from an air vent! You rush forward and pull him down, but he is already dead.

'Enjoying my handiwork?' asks a horribly familiar voice behind you. You turn to see Omoz in the doorway, a sadistic leer on his face and a flamethrower in his taloned hands. 'The entertainment doesn't stop there though,' he continues amicably. 'How about some barbecue?'

With a laugh he sends a stream of flame flying towards you.

Are you wearing flame-resistant armour? If so, turn to **60**. If not, turn to **117**.



79

There is an ominous rumbling above your head and dust begins to fall from the ceiling.

'Rockfall!' yells Finnegan. 'Everyone out!'

You race after him. You hear the crash of falling rocks and the screams of those who are too slow to escape behind you. Turning round you see one woman pinned down by massive boulders, her arm outstretched. 'Help me!' she screams.

Will you run back to help her (turn to **46**), or will you run on after Finnegan (turn to **10**)?

80

You find Parnal Kyras sitting outside his ship enjoying some Exstarz beer with his first mate. You ask him how much it would cost for him to get you off planet. 'Six hundred credits,' he says bluntly, flashing you an incorrigible smile.

'That's outrageous!' you reply. 'Two hundred credits is as much as I'm willing to offer.'

'What you've got to understand,' he replies genially, 'is that it'll put me out to be a ferry service to you. I'm a cargo dealer me, not a taxi-service. But seeing as I like your manner I'll do it for five hundred creds.'

'Two-fifty,' you respond. 'I don't care where you take me. Just bring me along on your next cargo run.

'Two-fifty won't even feed my many horrible children, my tight-fisted friend. Four hundred and fifty.'

The banter continues like this until eventually you settle on 350 credits. 'I'll be back as soon as I have the money,' you respond.

'Fine,' says Parnal. 'We'll be here when you do.'

As you hurry towards the exit of the spaceport, you hear a loud 'Psst!' and turn to see a man armed with a laser pistol lurking in a shadowy corridor and beckoning for you to approach. Will you do so (turn to **127**)? Or will you run away (turn to **57**)?

81

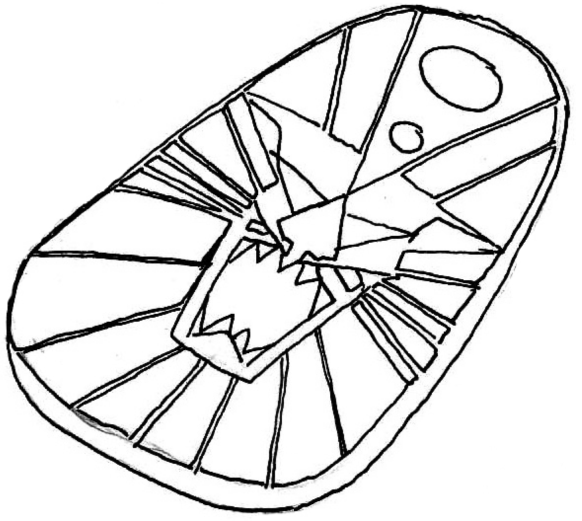
After unsuccessfully trying to flog the jacket to a pair of uninterested Silazians you try a surprisingly well dressed Mercani who gladly takes if off your hands for 30 credits. 'This could come in very handy for me,' he says with a cheerful grin. You dread to think what his intentions are. Record the money on your *Adventure Sheet* and add 1 to both your VILLAINY and TRAIL scores before turning to **193**.

82

The foreman doesn't seem greatly concerned by your news. 'No one cares. Plus it keeps morale up.'

'I wonder whether the police would see things the same way,' you state, your meaning obvious.

The foreman sighs and orders two Aquanarians (whose species are immune to the effects of ethessal gas) to seal the leak. You head back to work and are greeted by dirty looks and dark mutterings. You shrug and continue working. It seems no-one appreciates those with a conscience. Record the codeword *paragon* on your *Adventure Sheet* and add 1 to your TRAIL score before turning to **129**.



83

You'll have to cross town to reach the mines. Will you walk (turn to **32**), or take the monorail (turn to **121**)?

84

Your lungs fill with the highly toxic gas and you collapse to the ground in agony. At least death comes quickly for you.

85

You yell out an alarm and dash down a dark alley, your partners in crime close behind. Once you're sure no-one is pursuing, you return to Zardon at a more relaxed pace. He isn't best pleased that you have come back empty handed.

'There's no point us all getting arrested, boss,' argues Freddo.

'Hmph,' growl Zardon. 'Let's hope you all do a bit better tomorrow or you could all find yourselves looking for work elsewhere.'

You guess that is you cue to leave. Turn to **39**.

86

It’s getting harder and harder to breathe (lose 3 STAMINA points). You need to find a doctor and fast. Your breath rasping through your aching lungs, you find a backstreet doctor two blocks away. He examines you with beady eyes and a creepy smile upon his face. ‘Yes, I can cure you,’ he assures in a sickly-sweet voice. ‘It’ll cost you sixty credits though.’

‘Sixty credits!’ you wheeze. ‘Where’s your sense of decency?’

‘Decency doesn’t pay the bills, my short breathed friend. But you’re free to go elsewhere for a cure. You might even make it to the city centre before your agonising death.’

He certainly has a way with words. If you are willing to pay up 60 credits, turn to **104**. If you cannot or will not pay, turn to **152**.

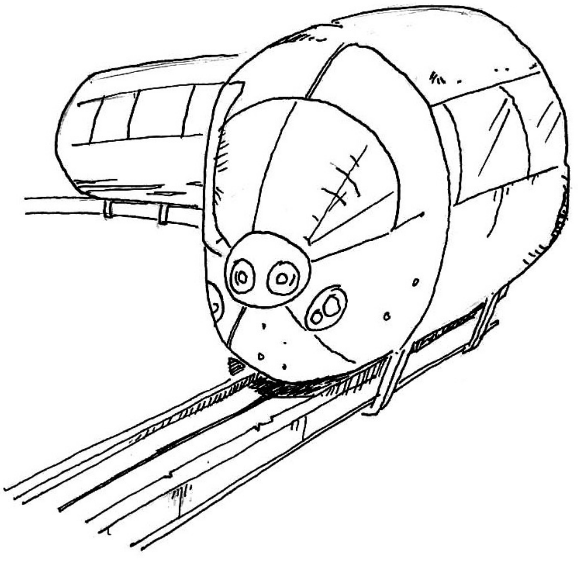
87

You spend the morning in the company of a worryingly thin miner. Over the incessant hum of the portable extractors he tells you of a time he fell in with a cult that operates in an old bomb shelter in the city. ‘Call themselves the cult of Despair,’ he recalls. ‘They believe that nothing in life is worth living for and the sooner people accept that the freer they’ll be. Course I had no real interest in it, but my friend Samuel was intrigued and I went down there with them. Their leader is this hooded weirdo. Started spouting all sorts of crap about life’s emptiness. We were about to leave, but he insisted on touching our faces before we left. I didn’t see any harm in it so we let him and suddenly I was consumed by feelings of hopelessness and Samuel seemed to go the same way. All I wanted to do is stay there with the rest of the cult forever. It’s only when I banged my head one day that I came to my senses and left. I think Samuel’s still down there.’

‘A remarkable story,’ you reply.

‘But a true one,’ the man assures. ‘If you ever run into the cult don’t let the leader touch your face.’

You shrug and continue working. Turn to **129**.



88

Before you can even turn to run, the D’laré guns you down, the laser beams burning right through your flesh. As you lie dying in the stinking alleyway at least you have the satisfaction that Omoz will be denied the joy of killing you himself.

89

As he nears you, you throw a punch at his face. There is a horrible crunch and you grasp your hand in pain (lose 1 STAMINA point). This guy is made of metal!

‘You dare strike Despair?’ he demands. ‘My acolytes, teach this hoper the true meaning of misery!’

His dull-eyed followers converge on you. If you have a laser pistol, will you pull it out and fire on the robotic Despair (turn to **125**)? Otherwise, you can try and fight off his acolytes by turning to **34**, or turn and run (turn to **41**)?

90

The Mercani sighs then offers to take you to his storehouse. He disembarks at the next station and leads you through a warren of winding streets and back alleys. You are beginning to get suspicious when he gives a whistle then dashes down a rubbish-strewn alleyway. Before you can give chase, his wrestler accomplice leaps out of the shadows and encircles you in a monstrous bear hug.

WRESTLER	SKILL 11	STAMINA 12

The wrestler will try to squeeze 2 STAMINA points of life out of you each round. If he wins the Attack Round he does so. If you win an Attack Round you don’t damage him, you just loosen his grip. If you win two rounds in a row, you shake free of him and can then fight as normal. If you defeat the Mountain of Muscle, turn to **77**.

91

You find your contact standing nervously in the main foyer. He hands you the metal case after making sure no-one is watching. ‘Tell Zardon he can get someone else to do this kinda stuff in future,’ he says before disappearing into the crowd.

You can’t help but feel somewhat intrigued by what could be in this case. Will you open it (turn to **146**)? Or will you just take the monorail back to Zardon’s hideout (turn to **180**)?

92

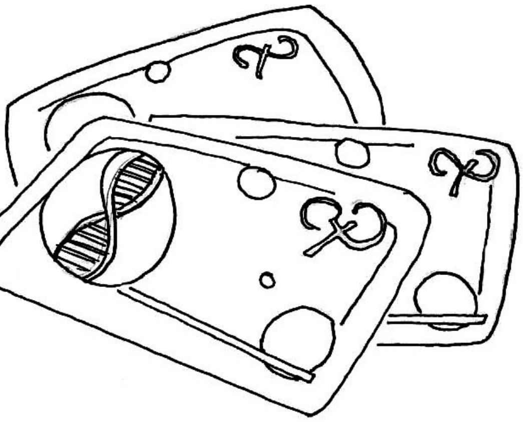
Choking and spluttering you race towards the door – but it won’t unlock! You rip off the door’s control panel and try to fiddle with the wires, but the gas is making you feel light headed and you just can’t concentrate. Finally you succumb to the poison and collapse to the floor, hacking and coughing before an agonizing death claims you.

93

You fire on the robot who spins round and target his arm laser on you.

SECURITY BOT	SKILL 8	STAMINA 10

If you win this shooting combat, turn to **182**.



94

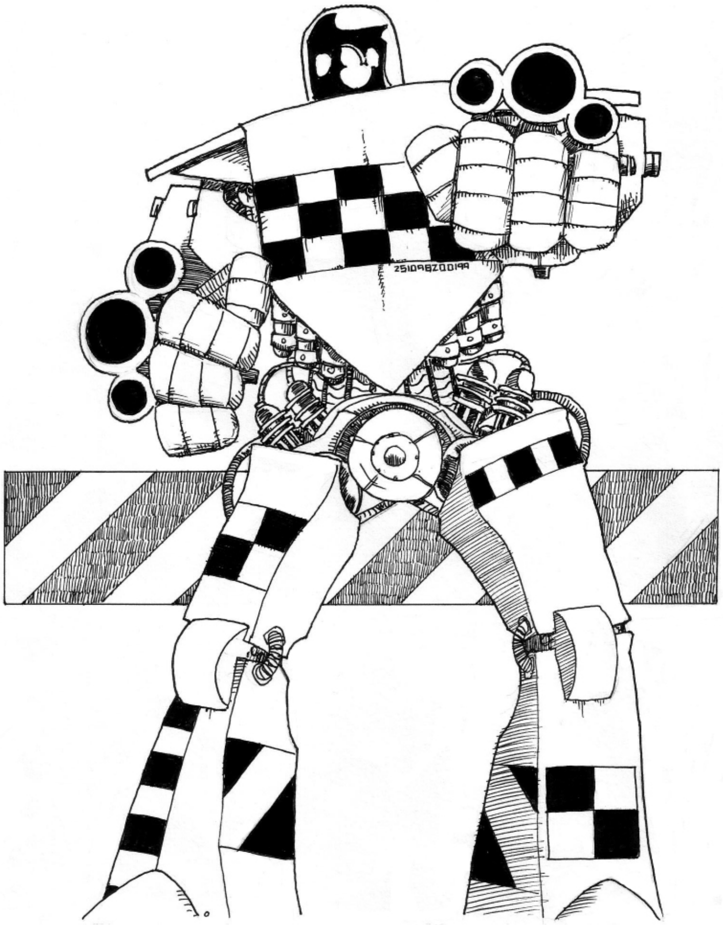
Without dawdling you make your way to the spaceport. You find Parnal Kyras sitting outside his ship in much the same position as when you left him (has he even moved?). You hurriedly tell him you have the money.

‘Great,’ he replies. ‘I was beginning to think you’d been disintegrated by whoever’s after you.’

‘How did you know—’ you start but Kyras cuts you off with a loud chuckle.

‘Parnal Kyras doesn’t miss much, my friend. Well climb aboard then. I’m sure you’re as eager to leave this dump as I am.’

He doesn’t have to tell you twice. A sullen crewmember shows you to your cabin and you stretch out on the hard bunk. You feel the hum of the ship’s engines and soon you are being carried through the air into the darkness of space. You’ve done it! You’ve bested Omoz! And soon you will be among friends. You drift into a blissful sleep. Turn to **16**.



95

You are directed to a low warehouse where various beings skulk in the darkness making low-voiced transactions. You display your jacket on a rotting table and wait for a buyer. Not long after, a tall man with his hair in a long black ponytail offers to buy the jacket for 100 credits. ‘It’s just what I’ve been looking for,’ he wheezes. ‘I’ve tried to make my own but it’s so hard to recreate the electro-insignias.’

Not wanting to know anything more about it, you gruntingly hand him the jacket and pocket the credits he proffers (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). Add 1 to your VILLAINY and 1 to your TRAIL score. As you turn to go, a scarred Mercani offers to sell you a laser pistol for 80 credits. Make the deal if you wish, deducting the amount from your *Adventure Sheet*, before turning to **193**.

96

A familiar face gets on the train and sits opposite you – it’s Freddo! ‘Don’t be nervous,’ he assures. ‘Zardon was pretty annoyed when you didn’t show up, but he doesn’t want you dead. Not yet anyway.’

‘So what does he want?’ you manage.

‘Simple reparations. He lost a valuable employee with you. Cough up seventy credits and he’ll let you go in peace.’

Will you hand 70 credits over to Freddo? If so, cross them off your *Adventure Sheet* then turn to **24**. If you cannot or will not pay, turn to **138**.

97

Test your Trail score. If you have been caught, turn to **134**. If not, you spend a tiring but uneventful day's work in the mines chatting to Finnegan. When the day is finally done, you collect your 45 credits and wave goodbye to the miners (add the credits to your *Adventure Sheet*). You head back into the city, worrying that you have spent too long working here. Add 1 to your TRAIL score before turning to **39**.

98

'Two Aquanarians have been going round the neighbourhood terrorizing defenceless humans. Now, I'm no philanthropist but when these frog-faced scum think they can push around the betters, it makes me want to mete our some justice. Go over to the *Blue Fly* bar and remind that scum why they lost the war.'

Twenty minutes later you are standing in the pelting rain outside the dimly lit *Blue Fly*. Boisterous music comes out of it and it looks warm and cosy in there, but you are not eager to enter such a place. Bars frequented by Aquanarians are generally not overly welcoming to human customers. You take a furtive glance through the window and spot the two Aquanarians you're after relaxing on a couch, laughing uproariously. Will you enter the bar to confront them (turn to **154**), or will you wait for them to leave the bar and follow them (turn to **130**)?

99

The foremen is surprised when you turn up looking for work. 'Thought you'd done a runner,' he says. 'You humans can be so unreliable. Come back tomorrow then and I'll have work for you.'

As you turn to leave you bump into Finnegan. 'Hello,' he chuckles. 'I thought maybe whoever was after you had caught up with you?'

'How do you know there's someone after me?' you ask.

'You don't see as much of the galaxy as I have without learning to spot things. Still, he hasn't caught you so far. I'd stop worrying if I were you.'

He waddles down a tunnel. You wish you shared his enthusiasm. Your mind preoccupied, you take your leave of the mines. Turn to **39**.

100

You pull forth your laser pistol and take aim at the alien.

D'LARÉ	SKILL 9	STAMINA 9

If you win this shooting combat, turn to **14**.

101

You order the men to keep their distance before stealthily making your way towards the warehouse. A conveniently placed drainpipe climbs up towards an open window in the side of the warehouse. You clamber up it, hoping that it will hold your weight. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **110**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **47**.

102

You reach the mines. A crowd of not-so eager workers are already making their way inside and you follow them in. Turn to **61**.

103

'You ever spit at me again, I'll tear out you liver and shove it up your stink-hole,' you threaten unconvincingly. The Silazians burst out laughing in response. 'I mean it,' you continue. 'Don't you dare mess with Zardon again or you'll answer to me!'

The Silazians continue their laughter until they are abruptly silenced by Freddo shooting one of them in the face. They scatter into the darkness leaving the shot one to bleed to death. Freddo looks at you disgustedly and tells you to follow him. He leads you back to Zardon's hideout where he reports on your actions.

'This one hasn't got any stones, boss,' he complains. 'We're lucky those Silazians didn't try to jump us. It wouldn't look good for you to employ wimps like this.'

Zardon looks at you, seething with rage. 'Beat it, kid,' he growls. 'Don't ever let me see your face again.'

You beat a hasty retreat, the gang's mocking laughter following you to the door. You guess you had better try the mines for work. Turn to **176**.

104

Grumbling, you hand over your 60 credits (deduct these from your *Adventure Sheet*). The doctor pockets them into his grotty coat and hands you a vial of blue liquid to drink.

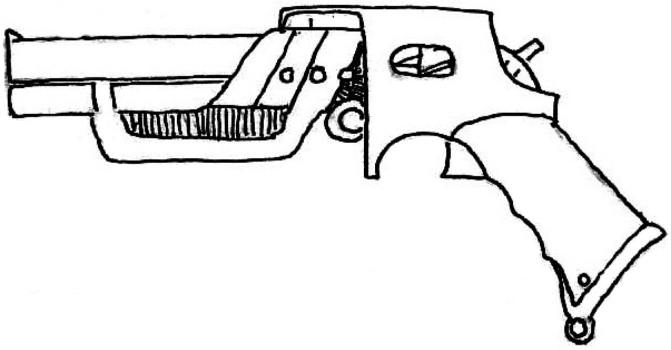
'That's it?' you ask hesitantly.

'That it,' he assures with a slimy grin.

You down the bitter tasting liquid... and instantly feel better!

'You're welcome,' replies the doctor to your jubilant thanks. 'Now if you'll kindly go away.'

You take your leave of the doctor's office and your joy is soon replaced by worry. Omoz is clearly a lot closer than you had given him credit for. You decide you had best make some more money quickly and head towards the mines to look for work. Turn to **171**.



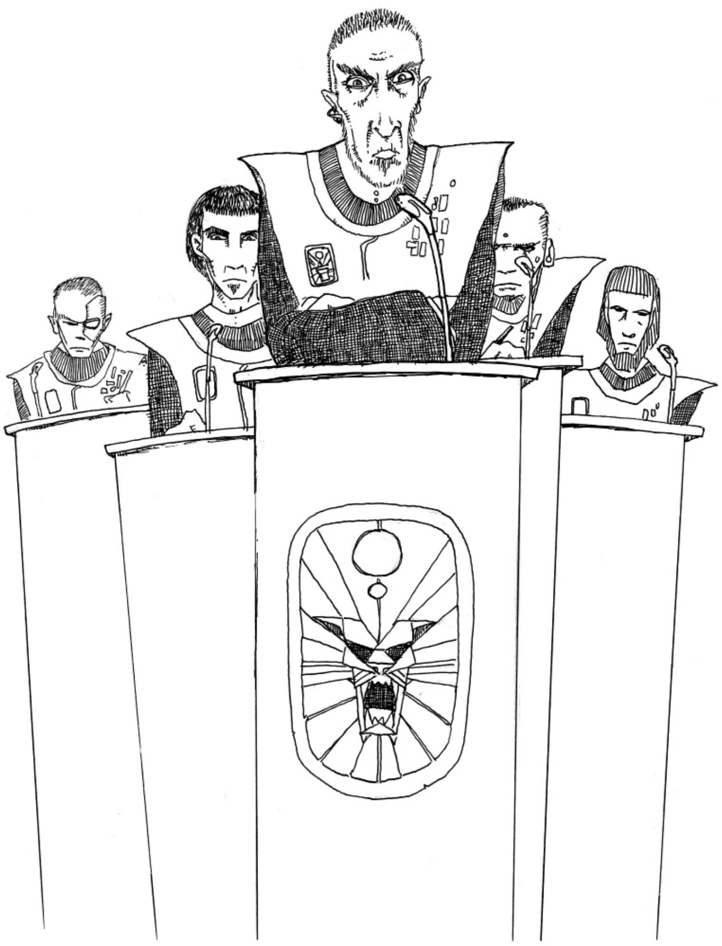
105

You are working alone in a remote part of the mine when your portable extractor hits something – looks like a lump of titanium. You remove some more rock from around it – it's a very big piece of titanium! Excitedly, you work away at it and have soon revealed a whole mother lode of the metal. You call excitedly and soon half the workers in the mine are helping you work at it. Once it is finally uncovered the foreman slaps you on the back and hands you 60 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). 'Good job – take this as a bonus and feel free to take the rest of the day off.'

You thank him and leave the mine, pleased with your discovery. Turn to **39**.

106

You stand facing the grey haired and battle-hardened war heroes who make up the military tribunal who sit in judgement of your actions on Karthran-6. Upon arriving on Melos-8 you were immediately put under arrest and ordered to stand trial. You have told the tribunal everything. You know if they were to prove you were lying you would most likely spend the rest of your life in jail. The members of the tribunal whisper amongst themselves, occasionally turning to look at you with gazes of contempt. Eventually they reach an agreement. The chair turns to you and in a strong voice declares that the tribunal has reached its conclusion. If you have acquired 6 VILLAINY points or more, turn to **132**. If you have only acquired 5 or less, turn to **200**.



107

You spot the immaculate *Felex 3000* resting in the middle of the garage, completely unprotected. You climb into the car and have no problem hacking into the driver ID CPU (*Felux* series hover cars are notoriously easy to hack). You start the engine and feel it purr as it roars to life and the thrusters raise it above the ground (gain 1 VILLAINY point). The garage door swing open automatically and you hit the accelerator, speeding out onto the streets.

You are just enjoying the drive when you hear sirens behind you. You look in the rear view mirror to see two police hover cars in pursuit. Will you try to outrun them (turn to **139**), or will you slow down and fire on them as they draw close (turn to **147**)?

108

Under a stack of papers detailing "clients" who owe Zardon money you find 50 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). Rather than tempt fate and risk running into Omoz, you take your leave of the blood-strewn base. Turn to **194**.

109 ☐

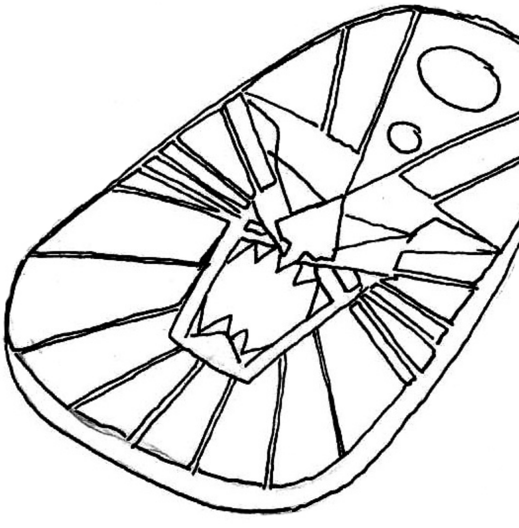
If there is a tick in the above box, turn immediately to **183**. If not, place a tick there now before reading on.

You are startled from your sleep by raised voices coming from the street outside. 'Your kind ain't welcome here,' yells the voice of a clearly inebriated man.

'Yeah, clear off Trawg scum!' yells another.

'I have no time for such as you,' replies a horribly familiar voice.

There is the sudden sound of a explosion of sorts followed by horrible screaming, then silence. Finally you hear the slow tread of footsteps heading towards your door. By the stars – Omoz has found you! Quickly, you gather your things and climb out the back window, but will you escape? *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **168**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **20**.



110
You pull yourself into the building and sneak along the plushly carpeted landing. You take a peak into a room to see a heavy-set man in red armour sitting at a desk and smoking a cigar with a look of bliss on his face. Sure that this is the leader of the Red Cruisers, you leap into the room with your weapon drawn and order him to surrender. He spits out his cigar in fear and throws his hands up. You grab him roughly and frogmarch him about the building, getting him to tell his men to come outside quietly and surrender to Zardon's men. Soon the Red Cruisers are all assembled outside, weaponless and with hang-dog expressions. Freddo orders them that if they want to live they will have to pay tribute to Zardon from all their criminal activities. They reluctantly agree and you smile, pleased that you pulled this off without any bloodshed. Before you lead the men back to Zardon's base, you order the Red Cruiser leader to hand over his armour (add this to your *Adventure Sheet*). This armour is flame-resistant and may aid you in battle. Happy in your new armour, you return to Zardon to report your success. Turn to **169**.

111
Stealthy as a jungle cat, you leap upon the Aquanarian and pull him to the ground, smashing his head on the grimy pavement. Stooping over his unconscious body you scratch a Z into his cheek. That should be a big enough warning to the Aquanarians (add 1 to your VILLAINY score). Searching him, you find 10 credits, some sort of high explosive grenade and a laser pistol. Take what you wish (adding it to your *Adventure Sheet*) and then return to Zardon by turning to **160**.

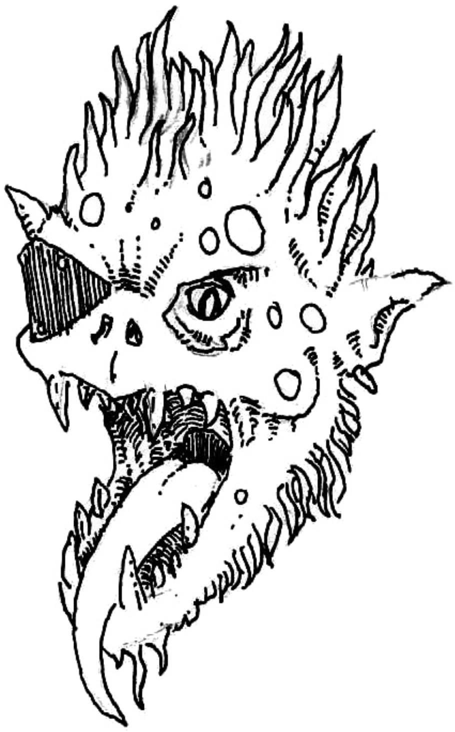
112
The unwieldy ball of energy flies above your head and strikes one of the support struts of the cavernous chamber. It topples backwards to land on top of Despair who explodes in a shower of sparks – he was an android all along! His acolytes panic at this revelation and all try to flee. Omoz swats them away like bothersome flies, but you are able to use the confusion to make good your escape. You return to the surface, the sunlight blinding you. The city looks so busy and polluted after the peace and tranquillity of Despair's retreat. You have no time to get re-accustomed though. Omoz will not be far behind you. You decide to make your way to the mines as quickly as possible. Add 2 to your TRAIL score then turn to **99**.

113
As Omoz thunders towards you, you have time to take a shot with a laser pistol if you have one. If you have two you may take two shots. Since Omoz is heading heedlessly towards you, you will have no trouble hitting him. For each shot you make roll one die and subtract the result from his STAMINA score below. Then the evil Trawg is upon you!

OMOZ SKILL 13 STAMINA 16

If you somehow prevail, turn to **75**.

114
You leave the crowded bar. As you stand in the cold street you consider your options. You could hide and watch the bar and wait for them to leave (turn to **130**). Alternatively, you could return to Zardon and report your failure (turn to **164**).



115
You are just drifting into that state of semi-sleep adopted by all commuters when a colossal force explodes into the side of the train and sends it flying off the rails to crash into the screaming pedestrians on the streets below. There are no survivors.

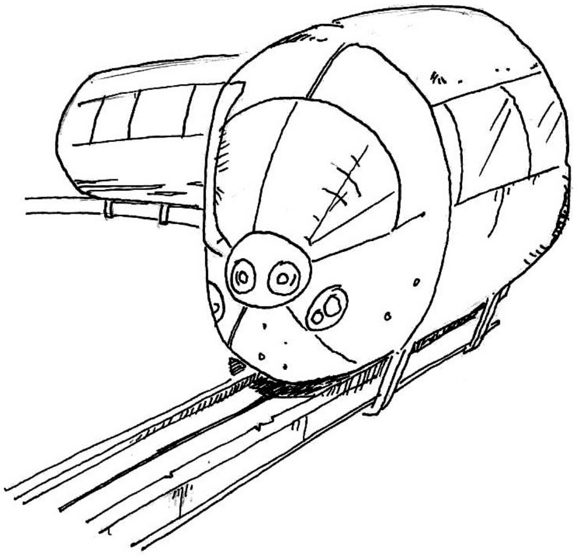
On the rooftop of a nearby skyscraper, a one-eyed Trawg lowers his rocket launcher and gives a grin. 'Bull's-eye,' he breathes softly.

116

You reach your apartment without mishap and pay your slob of a landlord 10 credits (deduct this from your *Adventure Sheet*). You tuck into the frugal complementary meal provided before crawling into bed. Turn to **36**.

117

The fire burns into your flesh and singes your hair. You collapse screaming to the floor, your senses flooded with pain. And Omoz just laughs as you are burnt to a crisp.



118

You quickly come between them. 'Now, now, we're all friends here,' you try.

'Perhaps,' Fl'zal snarls. 'But you humans are living on borrowed time. The Lyanians grow in power every day. And when they finally destroy your planet, you can at least be consoled that the D'Laré and our ways will live on.'

With that she stalks off. Finnegan bursts into laughter. 'Just when that conversation was beginning to get fun you had to be all responsible. Oh well.' He gets back to work. You shrug and do the same. Turn to **129**.

119

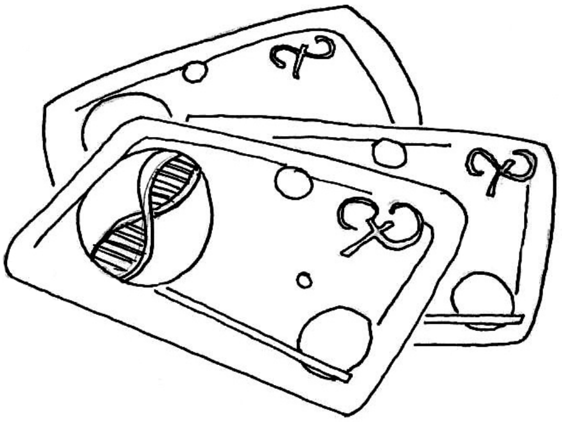
You burst into the corridor to see Omoz tearing out the heart of a security guard with his clawed hand. He turns to you with a wicked smile on his lips. 'Ah, so gallant,' he mocks. 'And soon you will be so dead.'

Before you can do anything, he bounds towards you and pins you to the ground. You don't even have time to scream before he rips your head off your shoulders.

120

If you have some circuit boards and wish to sell them, turn to **159**. Otherwise, you're going to have to find a place to spend the night. There are three options available to you. The city is littered with abandoned shacks, lean-tos, flats and warehouses. You could find one of those and squat in them. It wouldn't cost you anything and it might be easier to lie low there, but it would mean having to sleep in a rough neighbourhood. Your second option is to rent a cheap apartment. This shouldn't be too hard on your wallet and might be a bit safer. Alternatively, you could plump for one of the more expensive apartments. With all the myriad dangers of the city, most of these expensive apartments have their own security force to protect lodgers. That might discourage Omoz. Will you:

Find somewhere to squat in?	Turn to **73**.
Rent a cheap apartment?	Turn to **199**.
Rent a more expensive apartment?	Turn to **187**.



121

You climb aboard the battered and rusted train and sit in one of the few seats not covered in Silazian chewing bark. The train slowly chugs onwards towards the mines. *Test your Trail* score. If you have been caught, turn to **115**. If not, you try to relax as several other commuters stare grimly at you, perhaps pegging you as a stranger (add 1 to your TRAIL score). You try not to let it bother you. If you have the codeword *loner* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **96**. If not, but you have the codeword *bamboozle* recorded instead, turn to **21**. If you have neither, turn to **185**.

122

You are just about to buy some rather grotty looking rations from a wizened old crone when you notice your pockets seem worryingly light. Pulling out the contents you find a nimble-fingered pickpocket has stolen half your credits (deducts these from your *Adventure Sheet* rounding fractions down). You curse out loud – the stupid thief probably didn't even realize that by stealing your valuable money he may be dooming you to being torn apart by Omoz. Grumbling, you hand over 1 credit to the crone for the rations before returning to your dilapidated abode (deduct the credit from your *Adventure Sheet*). You tuck into the unappetizing food before settling into an uncomfortable sleep. Turn to **2**.

123

A few of the men creep up to the side of the building and set it alight. The fire grows quickly, ravaging the side of the building. A few Red Cruisers stumble out to investigate and are promptly gunned down by your men. The rest of the Red Cruisers soon realize they are caught in a trap, but they know that staying put will mean being engulfed by the flames. As they come out begging for mercy, Zardon's men blast them whooping loudly at their sport. You feel desperately ashamed for your part in this, but you don't dare stop them (gain 2 VILLAINY points). Soon, all the Red Cruisers are lying in pools of their own blood before their burning base. You quickly back away before the ineffectual police show up. Turn to **169**.

124

He hands over the 80 credits then hurriedly gets off at the next stop (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). Pleased with yourself, you sit with a smile on your face until the train reaches the mines and then you disembark and follow a crowd of workers into the dark of the mines. Turn to **61**.

125

You fire at Despair. The laser burns through his clothing and into his body, revealing molten metal and wires. You fire again and again until all that's left of him is a slowly melting lump of metal. The acolytes of Despair stand bewildered. 'He was an android?' manages one.

'He seemed to know so much about everything,' adds another despairingly.

'And yet he wasn't even human,' sighs a third.

The crowd of acolytes disperse sorrowfully. You have freed them from the grip of Despair and perhaps in time they can find hope in life again. Add 1 LUCK point. You make a quick search of the cavernous room and uncover 20 credits and a gas mask (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). You then follow the acolytes back out onto the surface and get a few stares from passers-by, surprised to see so many file out of the seemingly abandoned bomb shelter. Add 1 to your TRAIL score. You carry on to the mines at a brisk pace, trying to make up for lost time. Turn to **102**.

126

You stumble over a loose rock and hit the ground hard. You don't even have time to pull yourself up again before the tunnel ceiling crashes down upon you, turning your bones to pulp. At least you took Omoz with you.

127

The man gives you a conspiratorial grin as you approach. 'No need to be afraid, friend,' he says, ceasing to aim his pistol at you. 'I'm meant to be taking a cargo of circuit boards from a ship docked down that way.' He points down the corridor. 'Except I haven't cleared it with the owner if you get my drift. You fancy keeping a look-out while I grab 'em? It'll be worth your while.' Will you agree to this nefarious scheme (turn to **35**), or will you refuse (turn to **62**)?

128

You groan inwardly when you see several mechanics and some security guards in the garage. They are all involved in a lively conversation and haven't noticed you yet. They also have their backs to the car. Maybe you could take it without them noticing? If you want to attempt it, turn to **151**. If you just want to return to Zardon and report your failure, turn to **9**.

129

Nothing else of interest happens for the rest of the day. After several hours' tiring labour with few breaks the horn for the end of your shift goes off. You collect your 45 credits (add them to your *Adventure Sheet*) and head back into the city. Turn to **39**.

130

You watch the bar from the shadows of a nearby alleyway. Eventually the door opens and one of the two Aquanarians shuffles out. He ambles down a dimly lit street. Will you follow him (turn to **161**), or will you now enter the bar to confront the remaining Aquanarian (turn to **53**)?

131

As you walk through the rough neighbourhood towards Zardon's base you are observed by all manner of ne'er-do-wells and vagabonds. None dare to attack you though. Perhaps they are afraid of your employer? Eventually you reach Zardon's garishly decorated base. Add 1 to your TRAIL score before turning to **8**.

132

'Although you were in a unique and difficult situation,' rumbles the chair. 'It is this tribunal's belief that your actions were immoral, self-serving and illegal. You are to be dishonourably discharged from the Confederation forces and shall spend the next ten years in Archan-5 jail. That is all.'

You yell your protests, but two heavy-set bailiffs drag you away from the tribunal. You have escaped from Karthran-6 only to endure ten years of misery and drudgery.

133

Looking around you see all the Red Cruisers are dead or pleading for mercy. The gang will never be a threat to Zardon again. You congratulate your men and order them back to Zardon's base before the police start asking questions. Turn to **169**.

134

You and Finnegan are working quietly together in a new section on the mines when you catch a whiff of a pungent smell. Suddenly it gets difficult to breathe. You turn to Finnegan in alarm and see he has collapsed to the ground. He is choking and his face is turning purple. If you have a gas mask, turn to **30**. If not, turn to **84**.

135

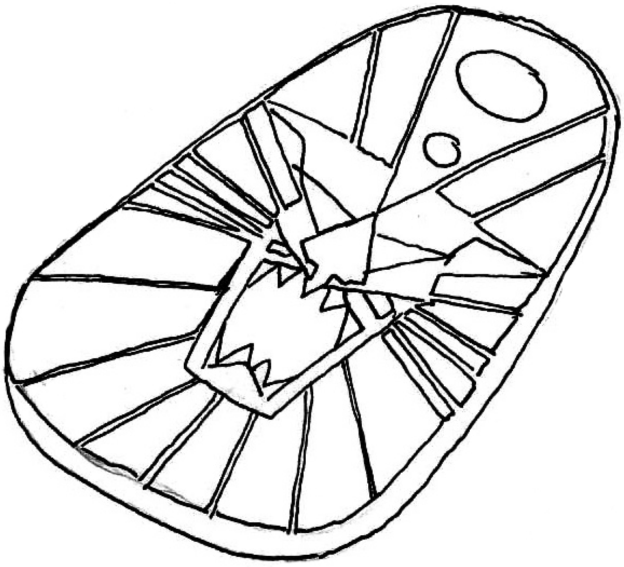
You search the three bodies and the house and find only 13 credits – no wonder they'd turned to robbery (add the credits to your *Adventure Sheet*). Shaking your head at the way the universe is, you leave the house and continue on towards the mines. Turn to **102**.

136

You hand over your possessions and credits to the Mercani and square up against the wrestler. You throw a punch at his face but he grasps your arm effortlessly and pulls you closer. Before you know what's happening he lifts you high above his head and throws you against a steel wall (lose 4 STAMINA points). As you stagger to your feet, you see the wrestler turn and race down an alleyway. Confused, you look around to see the Mercani holding your things has gone too – you have been conned! You race after the wrestler but you soon lose sight of him among the maze of streets. You do however find 27 credits lying in the road – small recompense for what you have lost but you pocket them anyway. With a depressed sigh you head onward towards the mines. Amend the number of credits on your *Adventure Sheet* and record the codeword *bamboozle* before turning to **102**.

137

You reach down for your laser pistol, but before you can even pull it from its holster someone smashes a bar stool against your back. You crumble to the floor where half the bar's patrons proceed to kick and punch you while the other half cheer them on. You lose consciousness and when you awaken you find yourself lying in an alley outside the bar (lose half your current STAMINA score, rounding fractions down). Battered and bedraggled, you return to Zardon to report your failure. Turn to **164**.

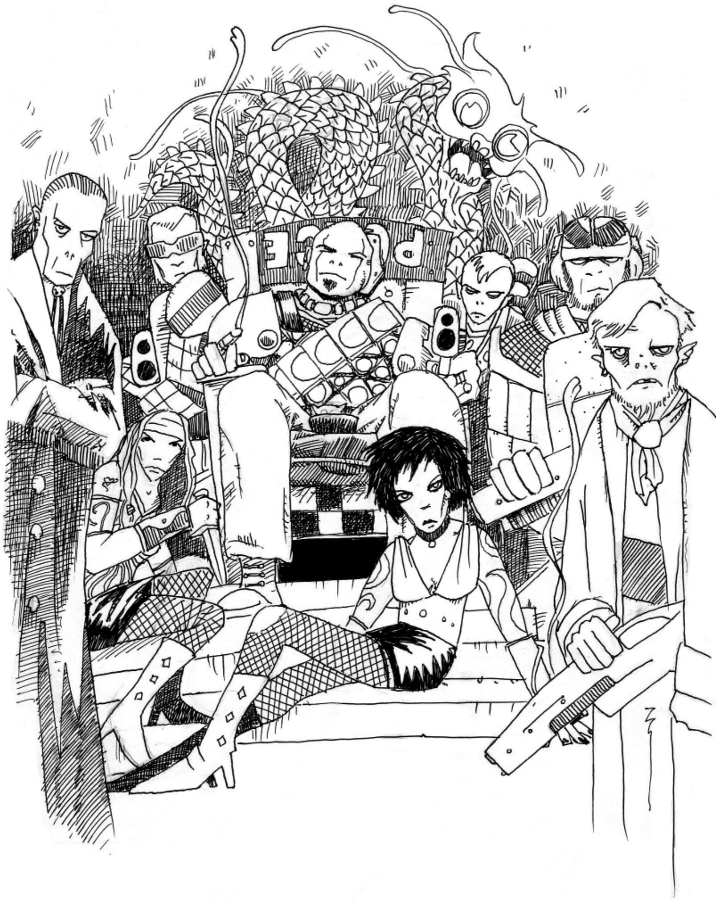


138

'Bad move,' says Freddo amicably. 'Be warned – next time we meet I might not be so friendly.' He gives you a curt not before standing up and getting off the train at the next stop. You hope that was just an idle threat. Cross off the codeword *loner* on your *Adventure Sheet* and record *nemesis* instead before turning to **185**.

139

You press down on the accelerator and the police increase their speed behind you. You try to lose them in the winding narrow streets. There is little traffic in Karthran-6 but you don't know the city as well as the police. *Test your Skill*, adding 2 to the dice roll. If you are successful, turn to **58**. If you fail, turn to **158**.



140

Eventually you find the derelict factory that Zardon has turned into his hideout. The whole building has been spray painted a garish neon-pink as if Zardon wishes to advertise his criminal activities to the world. A brutish doorman puffs on the dog-end of a cigarette as he looks you up and down and listens to your story. With a grunt he leads you to Zardon.

'So you helped out Al, then?' rumbles the crime boss. Zardon is a large bald man, his face covered in scars. He is surrounded by various human cronies, the men wearing patchworks of ragged body-armour while the women wear more make-up than they do clothes. All of them are armed in some way. They watch you with a look of superiority (add 1 to your TRAIL score). 'You did good, kid. You looking for more work then?' Zardon demands.

'Yes, sir,' you reply. You shudder to think what Confederation High Command would make of this.

'Okay. I'll give you a trial – see if you've got the stones to work for me. Freddo! Take our young friend to the sewers. He can sort out our little Silazian problem.'

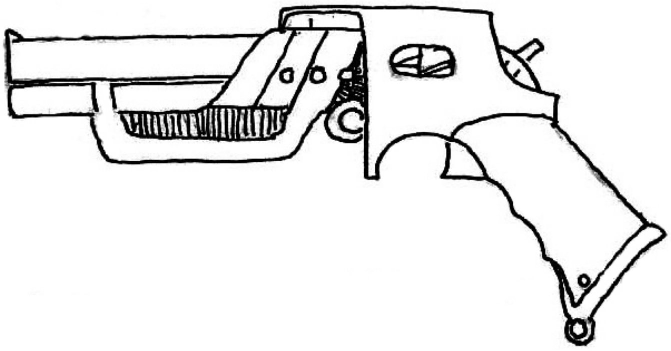
Freddo, a scrawny individual missing most of his teeth, leads you out of the factory. Turn to **68**.

141

Your heart leaps as you spot a harness fixed to the wall right next to you. Hurriedly, you strap yourself in and then reach for the handle to open the cargo doors. Omoz slows, visibly worried.

'Bon voyage!' you laugh and throw the switch.

The cargo doors creak slowly open. Immediately all the air is sucked from the docking bay and crates tumble as they are sucked into the intense vacuum. Omoz stares at you hopelessly as his talons dig into the metal of the ship, trying to hang on. Your harness is strained to near breaking point but it holds. Suddenly, there is a clink as Omoz's talons snap from his fingers and the hateful Trawg is sucked out into the blackness of space, his departing scream lost to the roar of the vacuum. You snap the lever back into place and breathe a sigh of relief as the doors close and the docking bay returns to normal. Turn to **75**.



142

You are chatting with Finnegan when a weasly guy sidles up to you proffering a laser pistol. 'You want this?' he breathes. 'Only thirty credits!'

'Beat it Philbert,' snaps Finnegan. 'No-one wants to buy your crap.'

'Not crap!' declares Philbert. 'Go on – twenty-five credits.'

If you wish to buy the laser pistol, turn to **195**. Otherwise, Philbert gives up and tries his luck with some of the other miners. Turn to **129**.

143

You hear the roar of an engine coming from the road behind you. You turn to see a huge red hover car, covered in spikes, racing down the road towards you! You dive aside but the driver swerves and crashes the car into you with the crack of smashing bone. The car takes off again and the drivers yells out, 'That's what comes of messing with Zeppo Zardon!'

But your mangled corpse can hear nothing.

144

Test your Trail score. If you have been caught, turn to **150**. If not, you awaken well rested (restore up to 6 STAMINA points). Have you raised 350 credits yet? If so, turn to **94**. Otherwise, it looks like you'll have to do some more work. If you have the codeword *grind* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **83**. If you have the codeword *wiseguy* recorded instead, turn to **70**.

145

The box explodes in your hands. Once the intense light fades all that is left of you is a small pile of ash.

146

As you flip open the lid of the case, a sickly green vapour seeps out and into your nostrils. You give a retching cough and your lungs ache. The veins in your arms bulge and seem to glow green. You have been infected with some vile disease! Hacking and spluttering, you close the lid and make your way painfully to the nearest monorail station. Maybe Zardon will be able to help you? Note down on your *Adventure Sheet* that you are suffering from green vein disease before turning to **48**.

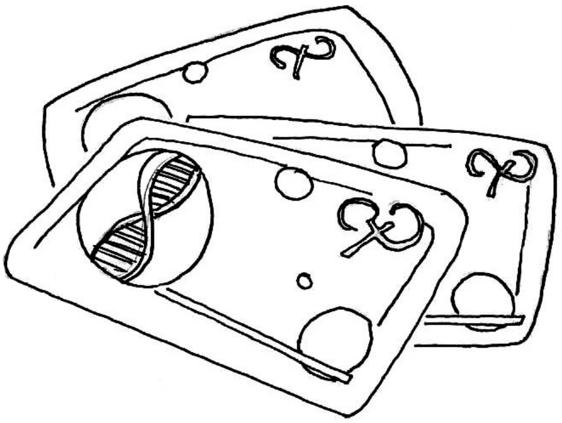
147

You hit the brakes then turn and fire at the first police car. You succeed in smashing the windscreen and the startled driver crashes into a wall. The second car cannot stop in time and smashes into the back of the first one. The officers scramble out and begin firing on you as you drive away. A few shots do some minor damage and scrape the paintwork but you soon leave the police far behind, shaking their fists in frustration.

You return to Zardon who is delighted that you have brought him the car, but is somewhat disappointed about the damage it sustained. 'Still nothing that can't be fixed, eh?' he says, handing you 60 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). You thank him and turn to leave. Turn to **39**.

148

Nervously, you flip open the lid of the case. No sooner have you done so than a sickly green vapour seeps out and into your nostrils. You give a retching cough and your lungs ache. The veins in your arms bulge and seem to glow green. You have been infected with some vile disease! Hacking and spluttering, you close the lid, but is it too late? Will you be able to find a cure before this disease does its work? Note down on your *Advneture Sheet* that you have green vein disease, then decide whether you wish to search the gore-strewn hideout (turn to **38**), or leave (turn to **194**).



149

Note down the 120 credits on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you now have 350 credits or more, turn to **94**. Otherwise, you will have to find work in the titanium mines and pray that Zardon doesn't catch up with you. Record the codeword *nemesis* on your *Adventure Sheet* and remove the *codeword wiseguy* before turning to **171**.

150

Your sleep is disturbed by raised voices outside your door. 'Halt! Go no further Trawg!' yells one of the security guards.

You jump out of bed in alarm. Omoz has found you! You hear an eruption of laser fire from the corridor. Will you aid the security guards (turn to **119**) or will you try to climb out the back window while you still can (turn to **174**).

151

You skulk through the shadows towards the car. When you're sure no-one is looking, you pull open the door and crawl inside. As you are trying to hack into the driver ID CPU, you feel someone staring at you and you turn to see several security guards watching you in amusement. 'Can I help you, sir?' asks one of them politely.

Before you can respond they drag you roughly out of the car while one of the mechanics calls to the police. Two officers show up promptly, confiscate your weapon and put you under arrest. Turn to **63**.

152

The doctor refuses to help you without money. You storm out, intent on finding someone cheaper but a few yards down the dirt-encrusted street you stumble to your knees, the pain of breathing has just become overwhelming. You croak for help from passers-by, but none stop. Just as you are given up hope, someone walks over to you. You slowly raise your head and blearily look at the good Samaritan who has come to rescue you – only to see the smiling face of Omoz!

'Oh don't mind me,' he chuckles. 'Carry on with what you were doing.'

Your head sinks back down to the ground. It does not rise again.

153

As your accomplice roots through the crates in search of the circuit boards, you see a security bot with a laser gun attached to its wrist emerge from a doorway. He strides towards your partner in crime who is seemingly oblivious to the robot's heavy footfalls. Will you yell a warning (turn to **71**), or open fire on the security bot (turn to **93**)? Alternatively, you could decide to make a quick getaway while you still can (turn to **5**).

154

You enter the noisy bar. A hush descends as the patrons stare at you in astonishment. You stride boldly up to the two, your hand resting almost casually on your laser pistol. They stare at you with a look of amusement. 'Beat it, human,' growls one.

'Yeah, before we do something you'll regret,' says the other.

The whole bar erupts into laughter. Will you attack them (turn to **137**), or take your leave (turn to **114**)?

155

You make your way to the mines which are built into some tall purplish mountains at the edge of the city. You find a Mercani foreman sitting at a paper strewn desk by the mine entrance and ask him if you can have a job. 'Oh yes?' he grunts. 'You got any papers?'

'No,' you reply disappointedly. Maybe getting a job here won't be as easy as you hoped.

'Perfect,' he chuckles. 'That means I don't have to pay you as much. You'll get 45 credits a day. You can do a few hours now to give you a feel for it.'

He leads you down a long crumbling tunnel, eventually emerging into a slightly wider area where several miners are at work, extracting ore from the rock with portable extractors. The foreman introduces you to a short fat miner with a huge brown beard. 'Finnegan here will show you the ropes.'

Finnegan is only to glad to help and hands you a portable extractor and shows you how to use it. 'Back in the day they used to use huge machines for this,' he remarks cheerfully. 'But they found it's cheaper to get a bunch of people, pay them slave labour wages and get them to use these portable extractors. Cheaper to replace us than robots and machinery after all.'

You chat away to Finnegan over the relentless rumble of the extractors. He reveals he was actually born and raised on Earth itself. You ask him why he left. 'I had my reasons,' he answers mysteriously. You feel it best not to push him further.

Eventually the day comes to an end and you are paid 45 credits for your efforts. Not bad for a couple hours' work. You imagine tomorrow won't be so easy going though. You leave the mines, heading back into the city. Record the credits and the codeword *grind* on your *Adventure Sheet* before turning to **120**.

156

As you pass a dilapidated house you hear an old woman screeching from inside. 'Help! Help! I'm being robbed!' she cries in a weak voice.

Will you rush into the house to help her (turn to **196**), or will you turn a deaf ear to her pleas (turn to **102**)?

157

The box beeps as you enter the digits and the door slides open with a whoosh. Breathing a sigh of relief, you set the box down gingerly before hurriedly take your leave of the bridge. You may have survived Omoz's sadistic trap, but he's still scouring the ship for you. Will you make your way to the docking bay (turn to **172**), or head to the canteen (turn to **189**)?

158

You screech round a hairpin bend and swerve madly to avoid hitting a doddering old man trying to cross the street. With a sickening crunch, you crash the *Felux 3000* into a steel wall with bone-wrenching ferocity (lose 6 Stamina points). If you survive you quickly climb out of the wrecked car and race down a nearby alleyway, the sound of sirens not far behind.

Once you're sure that the police are no longer pursuing you, you pause to catch your breath and collect your thoughts. Zardon is going to be furious that you wrote-off the car. Do you dare face him? If so, turn to **191**. If you'd rather stay well away from him, you decide you had best look for a job in the titanium mines. Delete the codeword *wiseguy* from your *Adventure Sheet* and add the codeword *nemesis* before turning to **171**.

159

Gain 1 VILLAINY point for trying to sell stolen goods. You ask a grey-haired old crone if she knows where you could sell some circuit boards. She gives you a look of alarm and waddles off as fast as her old legs can carry her. Odd (add 1 to your TRAIL score). You try a scarred Silazian who tells you to visit *The Yellow Orchid* bar. One of the regular customers is a red-haired man called Cornelius who often buys technological goods.

After following his directions you find the disgusting dive that is *The Yellow Orchid*. You push open the front door and look around the smoky bar for a red-haired man. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **7**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **29**.

160

'You won't have to worry about them Aquanarians no more,' you report to Zardon, feeling every bit the villain.

'Excellent,' he enthuses handing you 75 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). 'Keep up the good work and one of these days you could be running this planet.'

You allow yourself a flight of fancy where you are running a huge crime syndicate, sitting on a gold throne with cackling minions toadying at your feet. Quickly, you shake your head to dispel this vision – you are a Confederation soldier on the run from a dangerous alien and you shouldn't allow yourself to forget it. You take your leave of Zardon after promising to return tomorrow. Turn to **39**.

161

You follow him stealthily through the dingy back alleys. Eventually he stops to relieve himself against a corrugated iron wall. You stalk closer. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **111**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **17**.

162

You think you've given them the slip and start to slow your pace... when suddenly a bunch of officers come round the corner in front of you! You turn back the way you came but more officers rush down the alleyway from the other direction. You are quickly surrounded and have no choice but to surrender. You are promptly put under arrest. Turn to **63**.

163

You point the laser pistol at his chest. 'I'll be taking those circuit boards now,' you say with a grimace. 'And any money you're carrying.'

'You're kidding, right?' Al says desperately. You shake your head in response.

'You fool!' he shouts, angry now. 'You don't know who you're messing with. I work for Zardon! He runs this planet! You're as good as dead.'

'He'll have to catch me first,' you counter, sounding more confident than you feel.

Grumbling, Al hands over the circuit boards and 37 credits (note them down on your *Adventure Sheet* along with the laser pistol and the codeword *nemesis*). You order Al to run off down the corridor. You wait until he is out of sight then dash in the other direction, racing out of the starport as fast as your legs can carry you. Turn to **175**.

164

Zardon is outraged when you tell him of your failure. 'You idiot!' he cries. 'You've made me look like a fool! I'll get Ringo and Larry the Crusher to sort out those Aquanarians. Be back here tomorrow. And don't let me down again.'

Head hung low, you leave the burning gaze of the crime boss behind. Turn to **39**.

165

'Freddo, Al and Larry the Crusher are going to alleviate a warehouse in town of some of its surplus goods. I want you to keep watch for them.'

You nod in response. You spend the rest of the day with Freddo, Al and Larry who tell you the details of the job. 'We have nothing to worry about with this spacer watching our backs,' laughs Al. 'This one was born to watch the watchmen.'

As the sky darkens you head out, striding confidently through the dim streets until you reach the warehouse. Larry gives Freddo a leg up to an open window and then a few seconds later he opens the front door from the inside. Larry and Al stride in while you wait in the doorway, senses alert for trouble.

A few minutes later a man with his arms behind his back and whistling nonchalantly walks near to where you are hiding in the darkness. Is he the watchman? Will you:

Yell a warning to the others?	Turn to **85**.
Fire on the man?	Turn to **33**.
Wait to see what he does?	Turn to **12**.

166

You and Finnegan are working hard in one part of the mines with a surly D'Laré named Fl'zal. After an hour of back-breaking labour, Finnegan sits down for a rest. 'Phew, this place takes it outta ya some times,' he remarks.

Fl'zal laughs. 'You males are so pathetic,' she mocks. 'On my planet, we realize that males are the weaker sex and stop them doing any manual work. Maybe you humans should follow suit.'

'I thought on your planet you stopped males working so they were always on hand when you females needed to abuse them,' retorts Finnegan wryly. 'Sounds like a pretty barbaric culture if you ask me.'

'Take that back, male!' she snarls.

Will you back Finnegan up by turning to **50**? Or will you try to calm the situation down (turn to **118**)?

167

You reach the mine exit and throw yourself into the sunlight just as there is an almighty roar and the entire mine collapses behind you, sending out a choking cloud of dust. You tear off your gas mask and take a deep breath of the clean air. Omoz is dead but how many did he kill trying to get to you? You sit in a large boulder and mull over the events of the past few days, trying to think how you could have handled things differently.

You are startled from your musing by the sound of sirens behind you. A police hover car lands next to you and two startled officers climb out. 'What the hell happened?' starts one of them.

You explain things as best as you can. The officers shake their heads in disbelief. One of them will drive you to see Administrator Schnell. 'He'll know what to do,' the officer says without any confidence. Turn to **25**.

168

You pull yourself through and drop to the ground. Without a backward glance you race through the streets. You hear Omoz's unmistakable laughter behind you, but gradually it fades and you pause to catch your breath. You spot a seemingly deserted shed and head towards it. It should make a decent hiding place. You make yourself a makeshift bed, but are too terrified of Omoz showing up again to get any sleep.

Eventually the sun rises and your sleepless night is at an end (lose 2 STAMINA points for lack of sleep). You take a furtive glance out the window and, satisfied that Omoz isn't In the vicinity you prepare for another day fraught with danger. Have you raised 350 credits yet? If so, turn to **94**. Otherwise, it looks like you'll have to do some more work. If you have the codeword *grind* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **83**. If you have the codeword *wiseguy* recorded instead, turn to **70**.

169

Zardon is overjoyed to hear how you dealt with the Red Cruisers and his men hail you as some sort of hero. 'We'll have to call you "the Enforcer" from now on,' laughs Al.

You smile in response, not sure you like this nickname. Zardon hands you 100 credits as payment (add this to your *Adventure Sheet*). 'Come back tomorrow,' he commands. I may want to flex my Enforcer again.'

You nod and leave. Turn to **39**.

170

You hear heavy footfalls coming from the dim corridor before you. Then a horribly familiar shape appears out of the gloom. 'Surprise!' yells Omoz, sending out a spray of fire from his flamethrower. You race back down the corridor as tongues of searing heat lick you (lose 5 STAMINA points, or 2 if you have flame-resistant armour). If you survive, turn to **6**.

171

The mines are at the far side of town, built into some towering purplish mountains. The Mercani foreman seems to have no qualms taking you on even though you have no papers. 'No one cares about pointless bureaucracy on Karthran-6. Too much like hard work,' he remarks cheerfully. 'You can start tomorrow morning.'

A passing miner looks you up and down. 'New recruit, eh?' he laughs. 'Run while you still can.'

'Belt it, Finnegan,' says the foreman. 'You can show the newbie the ropes tomorrow.'

Finegan shrugs and walks down a tunnel, a portable extractor heft upon his shoulder. You say goodbye to the foreman and take your leave of the mines. Record the codeword *grind* on your *Adventure Sheet* before turning to **39**.

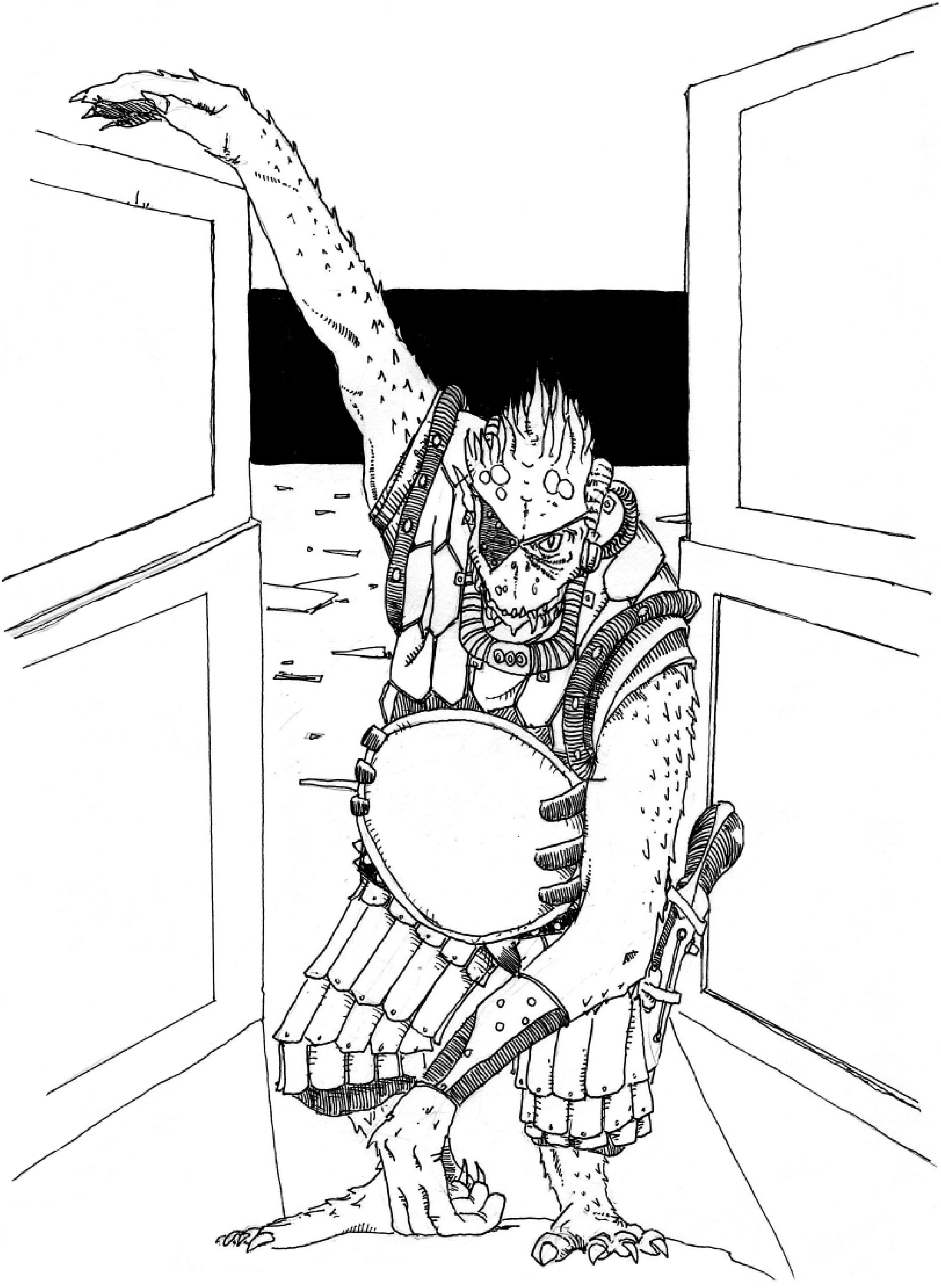
172

You reach the docking bay and make your way through the maze of dangerously stacked crates. Unfortunately you soon find yourself confronted by a steel wall. The only exit seems to be the massive cargo doors and you don't really want to pull the lever to open them and let yourself be sucked into the void of deep space. You hear a low snicker behind you and turn to see Omoz advancing. He has discarded his flamethrower and is approaching with his claws thrust out, ready to tear you limb from limb. 'Caught like a nubaxx in a trap,' he chuckles.

'You said you'd let me go if I escaped the planet,' you plead.

'True,' he remarks. 'But I climbed aboard before you left the planet so I think this counts. Luckily there's no referee to call things differently.'

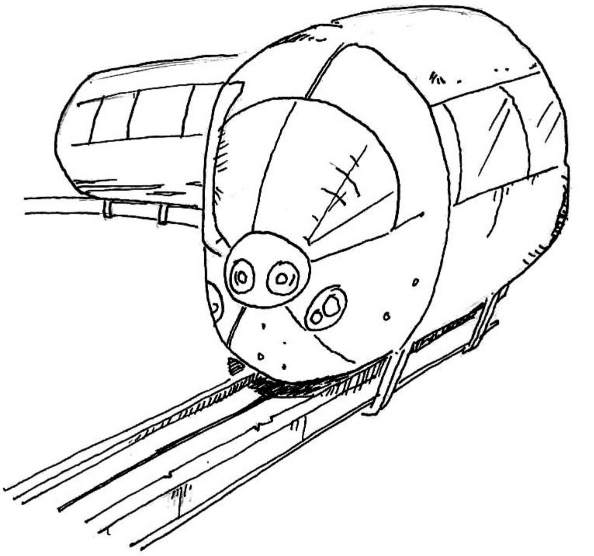
His smile fades as he stalks ever closer. Will you look around for something to use against him (turn to **141**), or prepare to fight your hunter and end this once and for all (turn to **113**)?



173

'You recoil?' says Despair, clearly surprised. 'Fear is unseemly. Whatever it is you fear it cannot be worse than the drudgery of life. My touch will remove the blindness and allow you to see the light that is darkness.'

He strides towards you, hand outstretched. His acolytes cluster nearer, watching you intently. If you allow him to touch you, turn to **179**. If you'd rather push him away, turn to **89**.



174

You pull yourself through the window and drop to the ground below, trying to block out the dying screams of the security guards. You race through the night, leaving the *White Arms* apartment block far behind. You enter the city slums and find an old factory to hide in. You prepare a makeshift bed and try to get some sleep, but you are plagued by nightmares of Omoz bathing in blood. You awaken the next morning rested, but hardly refreshed. Note down that your RESIDENCE is now a squat. Have you raised 350 credits yet? If so, turn to **94**. Otherwise, it looks like you'll have to do some more work. If you have the codeword *grind* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **83**. If you have the codeword *wiseguy* recorded instead, turn to **70**.

175

You need to make some cash and fast! But it's not going to be easy in a place like Karthran-6. The only place you can think of that might give you a job is the titanium mine at the edge of the city. You have heard horror stories about the place – workers dying in rock falls and passing out from gaseous emissions. Still beggars can't be choosers. To try and get a job at the mines, turn to **155**. Alternatively, if you have the codeword *godfather* recorded on your *Adventure Sheet*, and wish to seek employment with Zeppo Zardon you may do so by turning to **76**.

176

The mines are at the far side of town, built into some towering purplish mountains. The Mercani foreman seems to have no qualms taking you on even though you have no papers.

'No one cares about pointless bureaucracy on Karthran-6. Too much like hard work,' he remarks cheerfully. 'You can start tomorrow morning.'

A passing miner looks you up and down. 'New recruit, eh?' he laughs. 'Run while you still can.'

'Belt it, Finnegan,' says the foreman. 'You can show the newbie the ropes tomorrow.'

Finegan shrugs and walks down a tunnel, a portable extractor heft upon his shoulder.

You say goodbye to the foreman and take your leave of the mines. Record the codeword *grind* on your *Adventure Sheet* before turning to **120**.

177

You pummel the unfortunate Silazian into a bloody mess then give his companions a meaningful glare. They seem somewhat in awe of you as they drag their bloodied companion away.

'See what happens when you mess with Zardon!' yells Freddo as they scuttle off into the darkness. Freddo then leads you back to Zardon's base to give a report on your actions. 'Did good, boss,' he says to Zardon. 'Didn't take no stick from those Silazians, but I wouldn't consider them finished yet.'

'Not bad,' growls Zardon, looking at you. 'Turn up tomorrow and I'll see what other use I can put you to.'

You nod and leave, feeling pretty low for your rough treatment of the Silazian. Add 1 to your VILLAINY score and record the codeword *wiseguy* on your *Adventure Sheet* before turning to **120**.

178

You pull the gas mask over your face and race towards the door. It won't unlock! You rip off the door's control panel and fiddle with circuits. After a few minutes and a few electric shocks, you succeed in unlocking the door and it slides open with a whoosh. The poisonous gas flows out into the corridor where it dissipates harmlessly. Breathing a sigh of relief, you head down the corridor. Turn to **170**.

179

As his strong fingertips grasp your forehead, your mind goes fuzzy. You try to focus on your mission, on Omoz, but they just don't seem important. In fact, nothing seems important anymore. Life and everything in it is pointless. Despair takes his hand away, apparently satisfied as you crouch at his feet listening intently to his words.

You spend the next several days like this, listening rapt to Despair's grim sermons and living off dry lentils. One day however, something startles you out of your quiet life. Striding into the underground chamber, tossing acolytes aside like rag dolls come a scowling Omoz. Some part of your brain that you had thought gone forever suddenly screams for you to run, but Despair's teachings try to override it telling you to face the Trawg. If now is the time for your death, so be it. Omoz spots you and unshoulders a huge energy rifle. Will you flee (turn to **43**), or stay true to Despair's teachings and stand your ground (turn to **55**)?

180

You tuck the case under your arm and head back to the monorail station eager to deliver it to Zardon. Turn to **48**.

181

You take a deep breath and rest against the cold wall. Hopefully that will be the last you see of Zardon's cronies although you suspect that won't be the case. You search the bodies of the thugs and find 12 credits. You can also take one of their laser pistols if you want (add either the credits, laser pistol or both to your *Adventure Sheet*). The circuit boards were ruined by a stray blast of laser fire but at least you still have the money Cornelius paid you. You decide it would be best to make yourself scarce. Turn to **120**.

182

Add 1 to your TRAIL score. Your accomplice steps over the remains of the robot, the crate of circuit boards in his hands and a big grin on his face. 'You make a pretty good bodyguard,' he says with a chuckle. 'You can call me Al by the way. You can hand me my pistol back now.'

If you return the laser pistol to him, turn to **31**. If you would rather use it to rob him, turn to **163**.

183

You are disturbed from your sleep by a quiet knocking on the door of your hideout. The knocking becomes a loud banging then suddenly the door is ripped asunder by a power axe and the beaming face of Omoz pokes his head through the remains. 'Guess who?' he cackles.

You desperately begin to climb out of your bed, but you're too late. Omoz strides towards you and decapitates you with one swing of his power axe. Your head will make him a fine trophy.

184

You are working alone in a secluded part of the mine when two Silazian workers come out of the darkness towards you. 'You're the one who got rid of the ethessal gas, ain't ya?' yells one of them.

'As if this job wasn't miserable enough. You have to spoil the one thing going for it,' snaps the other.

'I'm just looking out for all our healths,' you reply.

'Well ya health ain't gonna be too great once we've finished wiv ya!' the first retorts.

They close on you. Fight them both at the same time.

First SILAZIAN	SKILL 8	STAMINA 7
Ssecond SILAZIAN	SKILL 9	STAMINA 8

If you bring their STAMINA scores to two points or less, they will retreat back the way they came. Once both have retreated, cross off the codeword *paragon* from your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **129**.

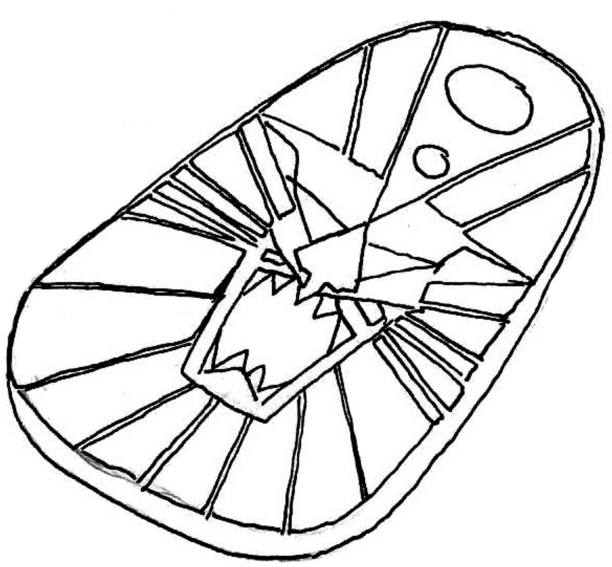
185

Eventually you reach the stop for the mines. Shaking the life back into your legs, you disembark and follow the crowd of workers into the mine. Turn to **61**.

186

The gentle morning sunlight shines through the window upon your face. You yawn and stretch before opening your eyes... to see Omoz sitting right in front of you, a horrible grin on his ugly visage. 'Wakey, wakey,' he laughs. 'You know, I'd really hoped you'd give me more of a challenge than this. This is exactly the kind of place I expected you to stay at and sure enough here you are, sleeping like you don't have a care in the world. Oh well, at least you'll be well rested before meeting your god.'

He pulls forth a disintegrator pistol. Quickly you try to struggle out of bed, but it's too late. Omoz squeezes the trigger and soon you are nothing more than a small pile of atoms.



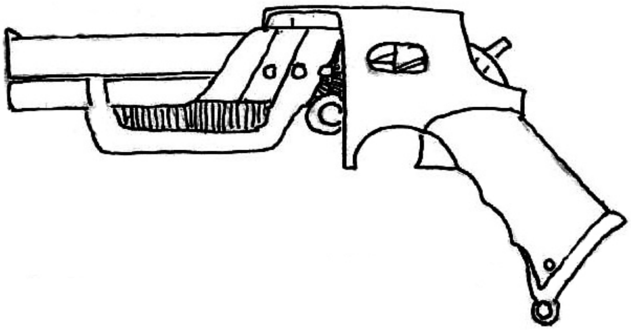
187

You approach the Mercani landlord of the imposing *White Arms* apartment block. He is eager to show you around the building and introduces you to the burly security guards who watch the massive building day and night. He then shows you a well-furnished room on the first floor before giving you the price – twenty-five credits a day. If you cannot afford this exorbitant price you must try a cheaper apartment (turn to **199**) or attempt to find a squat (turn to **73**). If you are prepared to pay the price, you hand over 25 credits to the grinning Mercani. Deduct this from your *Adventure Sheet* and note that your RESIDENCE is an expensive apartment.

The landlord provides you with a complementary meal of grilled skunk rat (a local delicacy) before leaving. You tuck into it greedily before collapsing on the warm, cosy bed. Turn to **144**.

188

The corridor is deserted, the only noise being the steady hum of the ship's engines. A fluorescent light flickers dimly above you. Will you open the door of the cabin opposite you (turn to **78**), or will you head down the corridor (turn to **170**)?



189

You flee down the deserted, dimly-lit corridors to the canteen. There you see two Mercanii crewmen sitting at a dining table apparently rapt in a card game.

'You guys have got to help,' you yell. 'There's a killer on board.'

They make no reaction. Apparently it must be a very intense game indeed. Will you shake one of them (turn to **22**), or turn back the way you came and try the docking bay (turn to **172**)?

190

'For too long the Red Cruiser gang has dared to get in the way of my business. It's time they were wiped out once and for all. I want you to lead the boys to their hideout and don't come back until that loathsome gang is no more.'

Soon you and twenty of Zardon's men are surrounding the warehouse the Red Cruisers use as a base.

'How d'ya wanna go about this?' asks Freddo. What is your reply?

'Let's all charge in together. They won't know what hit 'em!'	Turn to **27**.
'You cover me while I sneak in and get their leader.'	Turn to **101**.
'Set the place on fire. We'll gun them down as they run for safety.'	Turn to **123**.

191

'You did what?' screams Zardon upon your return to the hideout.

'I sorta trashed the car,' you repeat, rubbing the back of your neck sheepishly.

The crime boss snaps his fingers irritably. Freddo and Al are suddenly at your side. Before you can do anything they grab you by the arms and pull a sack over your head. 'Take our friend down to the Crusher,' commands Zardon. 'And for God's sake don't let him drive.' Your hands are bound behind your back and you are led towards a car parked round back. 'Sorry about this, buddy,' says Al before forcing you roughly in the back of the car. You are driven for several hours before the car comes to as top. The back door opens.

'Get out!' says Freddo gruffly. You are hauled roughly out before being led across rough ground. 'Turn round,' commands Freddo.

You turn round and are then roughly shoved backwards. You tumble down a smooth metallic shaft before coming to stop with a bump. A horrible grinding noise is approaching. You desperately try to free your arms or take the sack off your head, but it is no good. Soon the grinding noise is upon you and your body is slowly crushed into dust. And you'll never know what did it.

192

You turn round and see no officers in pursuit. It looks like you've given them the slip (add 1 to your LUCK score but also add 1 to your TRAIL score). You decide it would probably be best to find somewhere to rest for the night. Return to **120**, but you cannot try to sell the circuit boards again.

193

With Omoz on your trail, you'll need to get off this awful excuse for a planet fast. Unfortunately that's going to be far from easy with your extremely limited funds. You could head down to the spaceport to see how much transportation will cost you (turn to **19**), or you could pay a visit to Administrator Schnell and see if he can aid you (turn to **3**).

194

You stumble back out into the streets, stunned that Omoz not only tracked you down so easily but also managed to take out Zardon's entire gang so easily. If you have green vein disease, turn to **86**. Otherwise, you'd best see about finding work in the mines – it seems this neighbourhood is not the safe haven you had hoped it was. Turn to **171**.

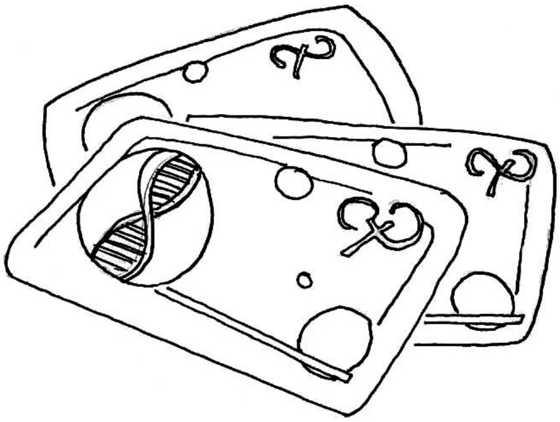
195

Cross the 25 credits off your *Adventure Sheet* and add the laser pistol. Finnegan raises his eyebrows at your purchase. 'Why do you need a thing like that?, he asks, uncharacteristically serious.

'Can always come in useful on a planet like this,' you reply curtly.

'If you say so,' says Finnegan with a shrug. 'Personally I think all you do with a thing like that is invite trouble on to yourself.'

A few of the other miners watch you suspiciously, maybe thinking something similar. Add 1 to your TRAIL score and then turn to **129**.



196

You spring into the open window only to find yourself facing a horrible old woman with an eye patch and arms like tree trunks with two shaven headed louts either side of her. 'My hero,' she says sarcastically in the voice you heard asking for help. 'Boys, teach this intrepid do-gooder the way things work on Karthran-6.'

The two skinheads advance on you. Fight them both at the same time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SKINHEAD	8	6
Second SKINHEAD	7	8

If you defeat them, the old woman howls with rage. 'What did you do to my boys?' she screeches. 'You'll pay! You'll pay!'

She leaps forward to attack you.

OLD BATTLEAXE	SKILL 7	STAMINA 5

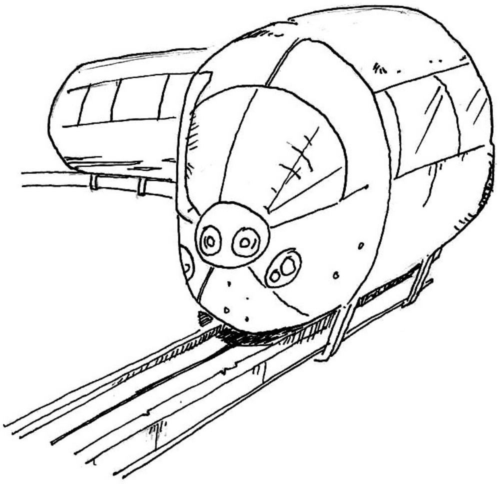
If you beat her, turn to **135**.

197

Zardon is pleased when you return with the money. 'You did good, kid,' he says, giving you a modest cut of 35 credits (add these to your *Adventure Sheet*). As you turn to leave he tells you to come back tomorrow. 'I'll have more work for you then,' he adds ominously. Turn to **39**.

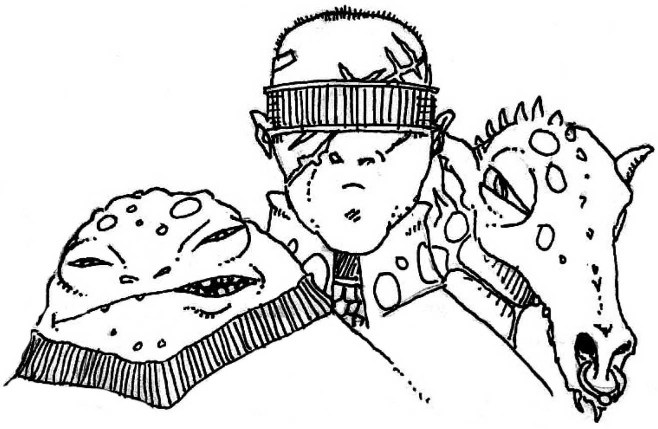
198

A couple of minutes later, you are aware of a strange smell and a hissing sound coming from above. Then you spot a billowing green gas flooding into the room from an overhead vent. The toxic gas enters your lungs and you drop to the floor coughing heavily. Do you have a gas mask? If so, turn to **178**. If not, turn to **92**.



199

You find a moderately priced apartment going for ten credits a night. If you do not have ten credits, you will have to find a place to squat (turn to **73**). If you do, you hand over your money to the surly overweight landlord who shows you to your sparsely furnished room (deduct this from your *Adventure Sheet*). You tuck into the complementary meal provided before reclining on the room's hard bed. Restore up to 4 STAMINA points and note down on your *Adventure Sheet* that your RESIDENCE is a cheap apartment. Then turn to **36**.



200

'Although some of your actions could be deemed inappropriate,' rumbles the chair, 'we understand that you were placed in a unique situation where you could rely on nothing but your own survival skills. For that reason any charges against you are to be dismissed and this tribunal thanks you for ending the menace that is Omoz.'

You whoop for joy. You have survived with your career and honour intact whilst freeing the galaxy from the villainous Trawg forever. Well done! You just hope your next mission is a bit more straightforward...

THE FACT OF FICTION

"The Fact of Fiction" is a series of articles designed to take a deeper look at the information presented in a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook, whether it be in-jokes, goofs, continuity with other gamebooks, the background to the creation of the book, or similar things. In many ways it is to act like a DVD commentary for the book, telling you things that you might not have already known.

Stabbed in the back! **Warren McGuire** and **Andrew Wright** are in a race against the Death Spell, but take a moment or two to stop and spot the references...

Title Page

- The author of the book is attributed as 'Luke Sharp' which is a pseudonym for another writer (see "Luke Sharp as a Pseudonym").
- This incidental art picture of a Mamlik Assassin is the first of three to borrow from Russ Nicholson's Gark illustration from *The Citadel of Chaos*. In particular, we can see similarities in the head, hair, and wristbands. One of the symbols on the Death Spell Dagger it carries is that of pi (π).

Rules

- Page 13's incidental art shows either a Gryphawk or Grypfalcon clutching a Death Spell Dagger in its talons. One of the symbols on the dagger is Shekka's Rune (three lines intersecting to form a triangle).
- *Daggers of Darkness* would be the last gamebook to offer the choice of the three standard potions till *Deathmoor* (Robin Waterfield, 1994).
- The incidental art on page 17 shows a Boulyanthrop Bird Man (see 172).

Background

- The meaning of the spell chant "Homrath Deis Blichneth Vaqua", used by the wizard Astragal in his banishment of a Mamlik Assassin, is uncertain – it may equate with the command "Begone, creature of the night!" uttered immediately before it. The chant contains the word Homrath, which also appears in *Fangs of Fury*, in the name Homrath Caves.
- The recently deceased ruler of Kazan, Segrek, is named after Segrek, son of Ushun Koja (see below), chief protagonist of the story *Segrek Son of Ushun Koja* in *The Book of Dede Korkut*, source of a number of names in *Daggers of Darkness*.
- Gorak, the name of Kazan's neighbouring kingdom, location of one of Luke Sharp's other books (*Chasms of Malice*), looks like it might be a word of Turkic origin, but no such source has (yet) been identified. Perhaps it was inspired by Gorak Shep, the last mountain village of the Sherpas before Everest base-camp. Here *gorak* means 'raven' in the Sherpa dialect of Tibetan.
- The name of Astragal, chief wizard of the Mage Council of southwest Khul, is derived from the Greek word αστράγαλος, meaning 'ankle'. Astragal has also come to be used as the word for the protruding rounded ridge at the top or bottom of a column.
- Vizier, the role of the evil usurper of the Kazanid throne,

***You* are the last hope of the Kazanids; you must enter the Fortress, with Medallion or without, and sit on the Throne, in order to rid us of the evil of Chingiz and his deadly daughter, Meghan-na-Durr.**

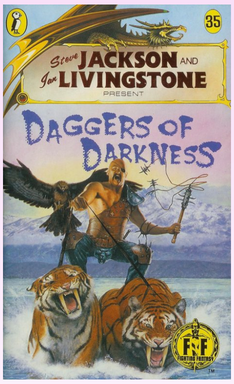
'Luke Sharp' (real name Alkis Alkiviades) wrote four *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks: *Star Strider*, *Chasms of Malice*, *Daggers of Darkness* and *Fangs of Fury*. All but one of these (*Star Strider*) is set in the wild tribal lands of southwest Khul in the *Fighting Fantasy* world of Titan.

Alkis Alkiviades completed a BA degree in the history of Near and Middle East between 1972 and 1975 in the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. His background in Near and Middle Eastern history is apparent in his three *Fighting Fantasy* books set in Titan, as is his Greek background – many of the names in these books are drawn from the languages and place names of Greece, the Near and Middle East, and central Asia. This trend is most obvious in Daggers of Darkness, where we encounter a plethora of names and name elements from Greek, Latin, Arabic, Mongolian and various Turkic languages, and from localities as far apart as Bulgaria and Afghanistan. In particular, names and themes in *Daggers of Darkness* have been taken from the language and culture of the Turks, tribal nomads originating in the central Asian steppes, who rose to prominence in the great Turk Khanates, the Ottoman Empire, and, ultimately, the modern Republic of Turkey in Asia Minor. One key source of these names in Daggers of Darkness is the collection of Oghuz Turkic epic tales, *The Book of Dede Korkut* (see "The Book of Dede Korkut").

In addition to his interest in the languages and cultures of Asia, Sharp / Alkiviades reveals an interest in the natural world, particularly in botany, in his gamebooks. In *Daggers of Darkness*, for example, we have names which reference birds (Eleonora, Gryphawk, Grypfalcon, Nighthawk Swoop and Owlshriek), invertebrates (Omorphina), and, especially, plants (Bithymian Vetch, Flaxwort, Kalamite, Mandrake Wolfsbane, Treffilli and Viper's Tongue).

The result is a rich nomenclature which adds immensely to the complex tapestry of cultures and creatures in southwest Khul. In this article the names in *Daggers of Darkness* are analysed to reveal the multitude of influences that make Luke Sharp's gamebooks so distinctive.

FURTHER INFORMATION



AUTHOR: Luke Sharp
COVER ARTIST: Les Edwards
INTERIOR ARTIST: Martin McKenna
PUBLISHED: October 10 1988
PUBLISHER: Puffin
GAMEBOOK NUMBER: 35
AVAILABILITY: Out of print.

Chingiz, is a title used in the Islamic world. Viziers (Arabic *wazīr*) were high-ranking officials and advisors to Caliphs, Sultans, Shahs and kings, as, for example, in the Ottoman and Persian Empires.

- Chingiz meanwhile is named after the infamous leader of the Mongol hordes, Chinggis (Genghis) Khan. It is worth noting that most names in *Daggers of Darkness* are not associated with the Mongols, however; rather they are often based on names found in Turkic languages.
- The Mamlik assassins of the Vizier are named after the Mamluk slave warriors of the Islamic world (*mamlūk* means 'owned' in Arabic). The Mamluks, in origin Turks, first appeared in the 9th century AD, rose to power in the Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt from the 13th to the 16th centuries, and were an important force at the time of the Ottoman Empire, in the 18th and early 19th centuries.
- The name of the capital of Kazan, Sharrabbas, is rather similar to the name of the infamous Barabbas of the four gospels of the New Testament of *The Bible* (see 267). It is also similar to Sharabha, the name for a part Lion, part bird beast of Hindu legend.
- Kazan, the wild land in which *Daggers of Darkness* is set, is most obviously named after the city of Kazan in Tatarstan in Russia. Like many names in *Daggers of Darkness*, Kazan is of Turkic origin, the Tatars being a Turkic people. However, it seems just as likely that this land is named after a character in *The Book of Dede Korkut* – in this case Khan Salur Kazan, son of Ulash and father of Khan Uruz (see 176). Interestingly, *kazan* means 'cauldron' in the languages of the Turks, and the Cauldron is the power at the Heart of the Throne in Sharrabbas in Kazan (seen in paragraph 265).
- The Ilkhan Mountains, Lesser and Greater, are named after the rulers of the Ilkhanate, that part of the Mongolian Empire established by Hulagu Khan in the 13th century across the Middle and Near East (see Hulugu), from Asia Minor to present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan. Here *il-khan* means 'subordinate Khan' in Mongolian, and was the title given to the rulers of this part of the empire.
- The name of Ushun Koja, founder of the ruling Kazanid dynasty, is taken from *The Book of Dede Korkut*, specifically from the story of *Segrek Son of Ushun Koja* (*koja* means 'old' in the languages of the Turks).

1

The hero leaves Astragal behind and ventures into the lands of Kazan.

- The carrion birds flying over Drago's Gate at the top of the picture make a return appearance at 322.
- Drago's Gate, a pass in the Lesser Ilkhan Mountains between Gorak and Kazan, is transparently based on the Greek root δραγο- (meaning 'dragon'), which is also the root of the English term.

2

An eagle takes the hero on a flight, but soon runs into trouble with three Grypfalcons.

- The name of the aged wizard, Geronicus, appears to contain, appropriately enough, the Greek root γέρον-, which means 'old' (as in English *gerontology*).

3

In a ptich-black chamber the hero is forced to fight against an unseen Dark Monster.

- Despite the gamebook asking if the player has the 'Ability of Darkfight' here, it is impossible to reach this reference without having acquired it! The same error occurs at 135, and at 317 it asks the same questions, although in this case it is impossible to reach that reference when in possession of the ability.

4

While removing a stone from their boot, the hero encounters a man on horseback.

- Mandrake Wolfsbane, locksmith and confident of Astragal the wizard, has, like a number of other characters in *Daggers of Darkness*, a botanically inspired name. Mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum)*, one of the Nightshades, has a long association with magic and ritual, probably because it contains hallucinogens and has roots which sometimes have a roughly human shape. Wolfsbane is a genus (*Aconitum*) of flowering plants which have a long history of use in medicine and the making of poisons.

6

A Dwarf is in need of rescue from an Executioner Orc, so the hero steps into the fight.

- While the composition of the minor incidental illustration of the serpent and chest echoes that of the full page picture accompanying paragraph 240 from *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* (Steve Jackson & Ian Livingstone, 1982; illustration by Russ Nicholson), the actual chest design has been borrowed from *Deathtrap Dungeon* (Livingstone, 1984) paragraph 93 as illustrated by Iain McCaig.

9

Stumping up some coin, the hero listens to the music of the hurdy-gurdy man.

- A Hurdy-gurdy is a musical instrument that is a variation on the fiddle and which produces a sweet melody when a handle is turned.

10

The hero uses a herb in order to disappear from the view of the necromancers.

- The name of the magical herb, Treffilli, appears to have been inspired by the name of a real-world group of plants, the Trefoils (or Clovers).
- The incidental illustration shows a Kazanid Panther (see 56).
- You can't know how to use Treffilli at 243, which renders turning to 10 impossible and thus makes this reference unreachable. This leaves just two places where you can use it, meaning you can exhaust no more than half of your original supply; yet there are three places where you can acquire more Treffilli, one of them on a path where you can't know how to use it. In addition, the use of the herb should cost 6 STAMINA points instead of 4.

12

After trading with Gimcrak, the hero runs into a spot of bother with some ruffians.

- The name of the Kazanid trader, Gimcrak, is probably derived from the unusual English word gimcrack, which means 'cheap object(s), knick-knack; cheap, tasteless'. This suggests that *Honest Gimcrak's Trading Post* is something of a merchant of tasteless baubles.

13

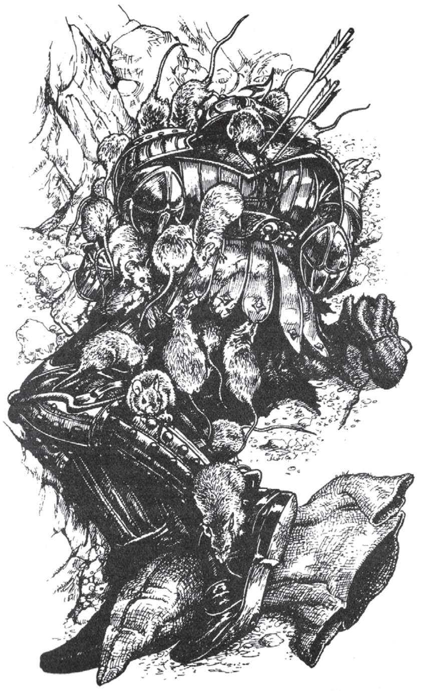
The hero has hitched a ride on a cart that will take them across wild bandit lands.

- The huge, ligneous, deadly Kalamites of the Kazanid marshes are named after Calamites (which name is derived from Latin *calamus* 'reed'), extinct horsetail-like trees of the Carboniferous and Permian geological periods. Whether Sharp also had in mind the southern Greek city Kalamata, famed for its olives, when he chose this name is unknown.

14

Falling into an underground stream, the hero is set upon by a Mamlik Assassin.

- This is the second picture of a Mamlik Assassin to borrow liberally from the Gark, including stance, belt shape, arm fins, wristbands, and head structure. Symbols on the Death Spell Dagger include Shekka's Rune, a stick-man, and a male fertility symbol.



- In addition, the boots and leggings of the dead body in the foreground are taken from the picture of a dead adventurer being eaten by rats in *Crypt of the Sorcerer* (Livingstone, 1987) paragraph 202 as illustrated by John Sibbick.
- Eighteen years before the publication of the first novel in Naomi Novik's *Temeraire* series, Kazilik Dragons made their first appearance in fantasy literature in *Daggers of Darkness*. Luke Sharp appears to have been the first to make a connection between the name Kazilik and Dragons, since Kazilik is one of the names in *Daggers of Darkness* which is taken from *The Book of Dede Korkut*. A place called Kazilik Mountain features in the story of *Boghach Khan Son of Dirse Khan*, and Kazilik Koja ('Old Kazilik'), father of Yigenik, is a minister to Bayandir Khan in the story of *Yigenik Son of Kazilik Koja*.

20

The gates open and the hero ventures into the Bogomil Maze in search of a medallion.

- The Bogomils of Kazan are named after the Gnostic Bogomil religious sect which originated in Bulgaria in the 10th century AD. Here *bogomil* means 'dear to God' in Bulgarian (see also 45).

21

The hero avoids one Orc only to realise with dismay that three Sniffer Orcs are on their tail.

- The name Boulyanthrop, given to the Birdmen of the Lesser Ilkhans, appears to be composed from the Ancient Greek words βουλή 'will determination' and άνθροπος 'man'.
- The Grey Talon of Sakar, given as a gift by the Boulyanthrop Eleonora (see 172), is named after Sakar, a town in Turkmenistan in central Asia.

28

The entrance to the Maze of Uruz is guarded by two minotaurs.

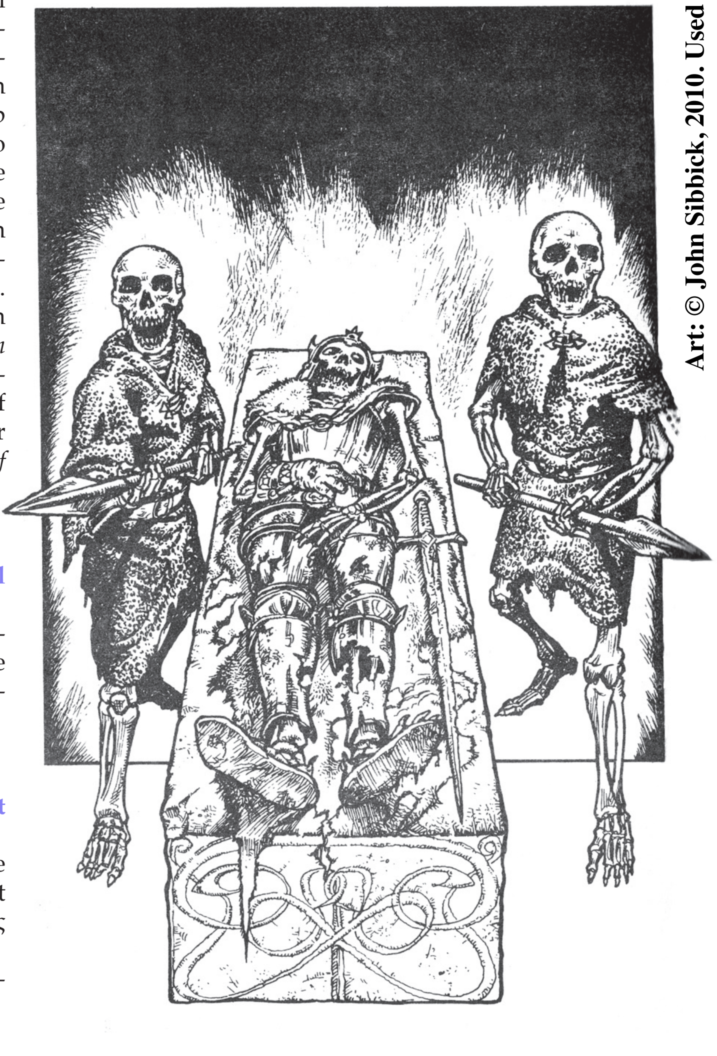
- The Gryphawk in the top-left corner is, under the influence of the Grey Talon of Sakar spell, showing you the correct route through the Maze of Uruz. The spears that the Minotaurs both carry are remarkably similar to those of the Skeletons in *Midnight Rogue* (Graeme Davis, 1987) paragraph 150 as illustrated by John Sibbick.
- Aggellatha (also spelt Agellatha) is the overseer of the Trial of Uruz. Her name may be of a Greek type: double -gg- (-γγ-) in Greek is equivalent to -ng- in English (although the name is also spelt Agellatha several times in *Daggers of Darkness*). This may suggest a link with names based on Greek αγγελ- (meaning 'message, announcement'), such as Angela (and, of course, the English word *angel*).

29

A Giant Spider drops from the roof to attack the hero and Saxifragus.

- The wizard Saxifragus, friend of Astragalus (see 144), is possessed of another of several botanical names in *Daggers of Darkness*. His name is Latin for 'stone-breaker', which is the origin of the name given to a group of small, mat-forming plants which grow in rocky places, the Saxifrages. It is hardly accidental that one of Saxifragus' spells shatters a stone floor.

Left: ***Crypt of the Sorcerer*** **(202)**
Below: ***Midnight Rogue*** **(150)**



Art: © John Sibbick, 2010. Used with permission.

LUKE SHARP AS A PSEUDONYM

Luke Sharp is a pseudonym. We know this because the copyright of *Fangs of Fury* is credited to one Alkis Alkiviades, and because the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London website lists Alkis Alkiviades among its alumni, and notes that he has "published fantasy adventure books under the *nom de plume* 'Luke Sharp'".[1] Furthermore, Alkis Alkiviades lists among his Facebook friends Marc Gascoigne and Graeme Davis. Additional evidence is provided in Sharp's gamebooks: Alkis Alkiviades is a name of Greek origin, and there are many Greek influences in Sharp's books, for example the names Brassino-Dendro, Mavra Khomata, Megala-Dendra, Potamos and Stoma; Alkis Fearslicer is a character in both *Chasms of Malice* and *Daggers of Darkness*; finally, the place name Minak Sikla in *Fangs of Fury* contains Alkis spelt backwards. So we can be confident that 'Luke Sharp' is, in fact, Alkis Alkiviades. It is interesting to note that the use of 'Luke Sharp' as a pseudonym is not confined to Alkis Alkiviades. Robert Barr (16th Sep. 1850 – 22nd Oct. 1912), the Scottish born crime author who founded *The Idler* magazine (with Jerome K. Jerome), also on occasion went by the pseudonym Luke Sharp.

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[1] http://www.soasalumni.org/Page.aspx?pid=407&srcid=441.

31

The hero encounters a group of Kazanids and is taken aside by one for a quick word.

- Zaranj, a Kazanid warrior of the Korkut tribe, is named after the town of Zaranj in Afghanistan, at the border with Iran. Zaranj has a long history as an important point on the trade routes between the Indian subcontinent and the Near East.
- Korkut, port and tribe of Kazan, is named after the supposed compiler and teller of the tales in *The Book of Dede Korkut*.

41

Using a borrowed mare, the hero rides with a group of Yigeniks for some time before coming to a rest.

- Yigenik, Kazanid tribe and settlement, is one of the numerous names taken from *The Book of Dede Korkut*, in this case from the story of *Yigenik Son of Kazilik Koja*.

45

In the Chamber of Ancient Magical Spells the hero is faced with a test of knowledge.

- Gnossis, the name for the ancient magic of the kings and queens of Kazan, is derived from Ancient Greek γνώσις, 'knowledge', which also gives us the word *gnostic* (see Bogomil).
- 1000-Fathom Seawater, a component in the ancient magic spells of Kazan, is from the depth in the ocean (1800m) where the Deep Sea begins – a region which no sunlight reaches, where the temperature is near freezing, and where the pressure is intense. We assume no reference to the works of other *Fighting Fantasy* authors was intended!
- Mist from Mithrir Forest is an ingredient in the ancient magical spells of Kazan. Intriguingly, Condensed Mist from Mithrir Forest also makes an appearance as a magical ingredient in *Siege of Sardath* (Keith P. Phillips, 1992), an adventure which takes place on the other side of Titan. Wherever Mithrir Forest might lie, it is not unlikely that this name was invented with Tolkien's *mithril*, the fantastic true-silver of Moria, in mind (*The Lord of the Rings*, 1954/55).
- Eye of Newt, as a component in the ancient magic spells of Kazan, is familiar to us from Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (written between 1603 and 1607), where it is used as an ingredient in the witches' brew (Act IV, Scene I) (see also Mayaka).
- Continuing the botanical theme in *Daggers of Darkness*, Viper's Tongue, a component in the ancient magic spells of Kazan, is clearly inspired by the flowering plant Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*). Bugloss is derived from Ancient Greek βούγλωσσον, which means 'ox tongue'.

48

The hero is made a part of the *Run of the Arrow*, a deadly game they may not survive.

- Omorphina, the Amazonian huntress of the Owlshriek Forest, shares her name with a genus of Noctuid moths, and is another example of a name inspired by the natural world.
- This cruel sport works in the same way as the 'game' of the same name played by Troglodytes as mentioned in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* (Ed: Marc Gascoigne, 1986) p.83 (large format)/p.185-6 (small format). How it is that the Amazons of the Kazanid forests and Troglodytes share this practice is unknown.

49

A message from Astragal is passed on to the hero by Adana-Broussah.

- The sure-footed Adana-Broussah, one of Beshbalik's Marauders and agent of the wizard Astragal, is named after two cities in Turkey – Adana in the south and Bursa (historically Broussa) in the north-west, in the ancient province of Bithynia (see 68).
- Beshbalik, the barrel-chested, chaotic mercenary leader (who features on the front cover of the gamebook) is named after a city (later called Jimsar) of the Uyghur Khaganate (now in Xinjiang). Beshbalik (also Beshbalyk) means 'Main City' in the Turkic language of the region.

56

Within the Yigenik maze the hero is attacked by a pair of panthers.

- The main picture of a Kazanid Panther is clearly based on the Black Lion pet from Iain McCaig's classic cover to *Island of the Lizard King* (Livingstone, 1984).

65

The hero is not only under surveillance, but now also under attack from two Khomatads

- The name Mavra Khomata, given on the colour map to the desert lands of northern Kazan from which the attackers hail, is a representation in English orthography of Greek μάυρα χώματα 'black lands'. It is perhaps worth noting that there is a Greek village, in Kalamos, north of Athens, called Akra Aspra Khomata, which contains two name elements used by Sharp in his gamebooks (άσπρα, found in Aspra Smoothcheek, mean 'white' in Greek).

68

The hero catches up with Vetch and confides to him the nature of their mission.

- Bithymian Vetch is obviously named after the leguminous plant Bithynian Vetch (*Vicia bithynica*); Sharp betrays an interest in botany in several of his names in *Daggers of Darkness*. In addition, Bithynia is an ancient Roman province in Asia Minor near the Bosphorus, in which region lies the city of Bursa (see 49).

70

A large bird delivers a Khomatad right infront of the hero and a fight ensues.

- Martin McKenna's picture of a Khomatad arriving via Grypvulture shows some influence by Russ Nicholson's pair of Blackhearts from *Masks of Mayhem* (Waterfield, 1986) paragraph 254.

84

The hero is awakened by a Mamlik Assassin attempting to stab them to death.

- The third and final picture of a Mamlik Assassin to be based on the Gark shows affinities with face, wristbands, and those telltale arm fins. Symbols on the Death Spell Dagger include an arrow, Shekka's Rune, and a male fertility symbol.

91

Explaining to the horsemen their quest, the hero is out to the test of the Bogomil.

- The first name of this Bogomil Kazanid, Bhoriss Canterstrike, is in all likelihood based on the name Boris, which is of Slavic and, ultimately, of Turkic origin. Its original meaning is unclear – 'short', 'wolf' and 'battle glory' are all possible. Since Bhoris is one of the Bogomils, whose emblem is the horse, his surname is very apt indeed.

98

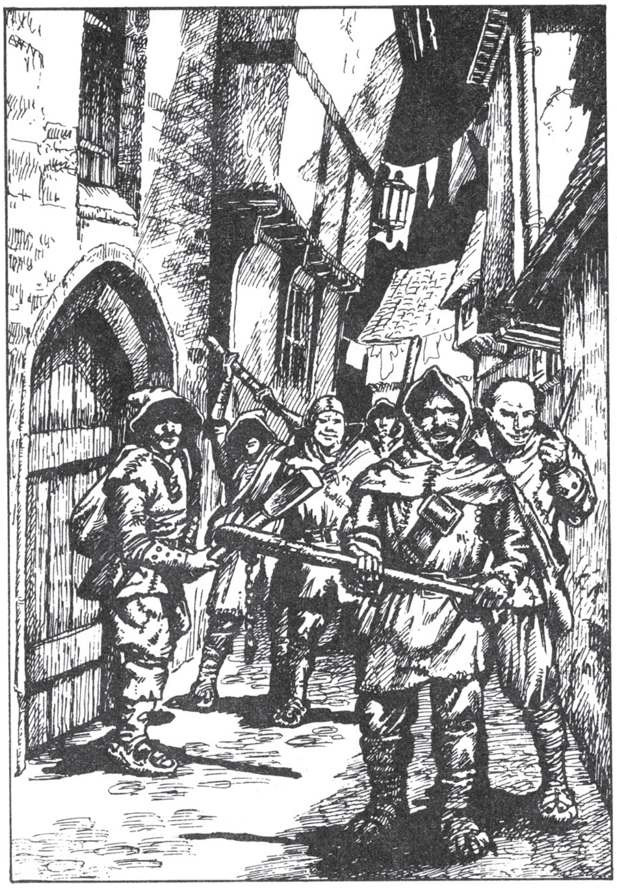
Entering the Street of Forty Guilds, the hero must choose a shop to visit.

- The Street of Forty Guilds in Sharrabbas owes something to John Sibbick's picture of Footpads from Port Blacksand in *Midnight Rogue* paragraph 271. In addition to various menacing characters on the street, one can also see nods to building shape and structure, the washing line of hung laundry, and even the trickle of sewage down the centre of the road.
- The Street of Forty Guilds is also influenced by the Red-Eye quarter of Kharé! Here we see further similarities in building structure such as the archway and the thatched roofs when compared to the illustration in *Kharé – Cityport of Traps* (Jackson, 1984) paragraph 132. In addition, compare the posture of John Blanche's black dog, to the black cat in Martin McKenna's work!

102

The hero is rescued from an encounter with a Necromancer by Nighthawk Swoop.

- The Boulyanthrop, Nighthawk Swoop, is partly named after birds of the Nightjar family, the Nighthawks, which are sometimes referred to as Goatsuckers.
- The name of the Boulyanthrop elder, Eleonora, is a form of the name Eleanor. Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonorae*) is a bird of prey which breeds on offshore islands in the Mediterranean, particularly around Greece.



Art: © John Sibbick, 2010. Used with permission.

110

Having set up a deal for Chogum, the hero is richly rewarded with money.

- The name of the truffle merchant Chogum is a representation in English orthography of the Turkish surname Çoğum (e.g. Mehmet Çoğum, who played for the Turkish football teams Gaziantepspor and Konyaspor in 2008).

114

A Gnarled Oak attempts to kill and absorb the hero who has taken the opportunity to put their boots back on.

- It's interesting to see here that the branch-like arms of the Gnarled Oak bear the same twig-like hands as the grasping limbs of the Wood Demon from *Crypt of the Sorcerer* paragraph 365.

117

The hero enters *The Dead Man's Chest* tavern for a meal and possibly a game.

- *The Dead Man's Chest* tavern in Korkut is named after a fictional sea-shanty in Robert Louis Stephenson's *The Sea Cook, or Treasure Island* (1881-82). More recently it was the name of the second *Pirates of the Caribbean* (2006) film, starring Johnny Depp.
- The game of *Snakes' Eyes*, played in *The Dead Man's Chest*, refers to the roll of double-1 on two dice, more commonly called "Snake Eyes".

123

The Bogomils challenge the hero to ride the bucking wild stallion.

- The name of Bucephax, a large, white, untamed stallion of the Bogomils, is clearly based on the name of Bucephalus ('ox-head' in Greek), Alexander the Great's famous steed.

130

The hero seeks help and is led to Brassino-Dendro by the witch Mayaka.

- The name of the chief witch of Brassino-Dendro in the Owlshriek Forest is of uncertain origin. Mayaka is a Japanese name, derived from Mount Maya, but whether this connection is intended is unknown. In any case, Mayaka and her sister witches are probably influenced by the three witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (see 45).
- Brassino-Dendro is a representation in English orthography of Modern Greek πράσινο δέντρο, which means 'green tree'.
- The main thing to note in this classic is that the crone in the centre appears to be adding a valuable Unicorn's horn to the potion bubbling in the cauldron!

149

Time for a quick drink the pub between the hero and Alkis Fearslicer.

- Alkis Fearslicer, Sensewarrior of the Gaddon people, shares his first name with Alkis Alkiviades, the real (Greek) name of Luke Sharp (see "Luke Sharp as a Pseudonym"). The root αλκ- in Greek means 'strong, strength'.

THE BOOK OF DEDE KORKUT

The Book of Dede Korkut is a compilation of epic tales of the Oghuz Turks, dating, in its final form, from the 13th century AD. The Oghuz Turks were a branch of the nomadic Turks who migrated westwards from the central Asian steppes to Transoxiana (the region between the Amu Darya river and the Syr Darya river, where they converted to Islam) and then on into Persia, the southern Caucasus and Asia Minor. Among the Oghuz tribes were the Ak-Koyunlu ('The Men of the White Sheep') and the Kara-Koyunlu ('The Men of the Black Sheep'). The stylised stories in *The Book of Dede Korkut* take place in the southern Caucasus, north-western Iran and eastern Turkey, a land of mountains, forest, plains and rivers, much like Kazan in *Daggers of Darkness*. Although Moslems, the protagonists in the tales still retain many characteristics and practices of their pagan ancestors, and their culture is one based on tribal loyalties, rivalries between Khans, and the nomadic lifestyle of tent and horse. Dede ('grandfather') Korkut is both a participant in and gatherer of the tales. He, like the other characters in *The Book*, cannot be identified as historical, and the tales, often rather fanciful, are mythology, not history (indeed, they borrow elements from Greek mythology, including the Polyphemus-inspired Tepegöz 'Goggle-eye'). *The Book of Dede Korkut* was an important source of names in *Daggers of Darkness*, and doubtless was a source of inspiration for the tribal culture of Kazan. Some of the most evocative names in the gamebook – Kazan, Kazilik, Korkut, Segrek, Uruz, Ushun Koja and Yigenik – are taken from these Oghuz epic tales.

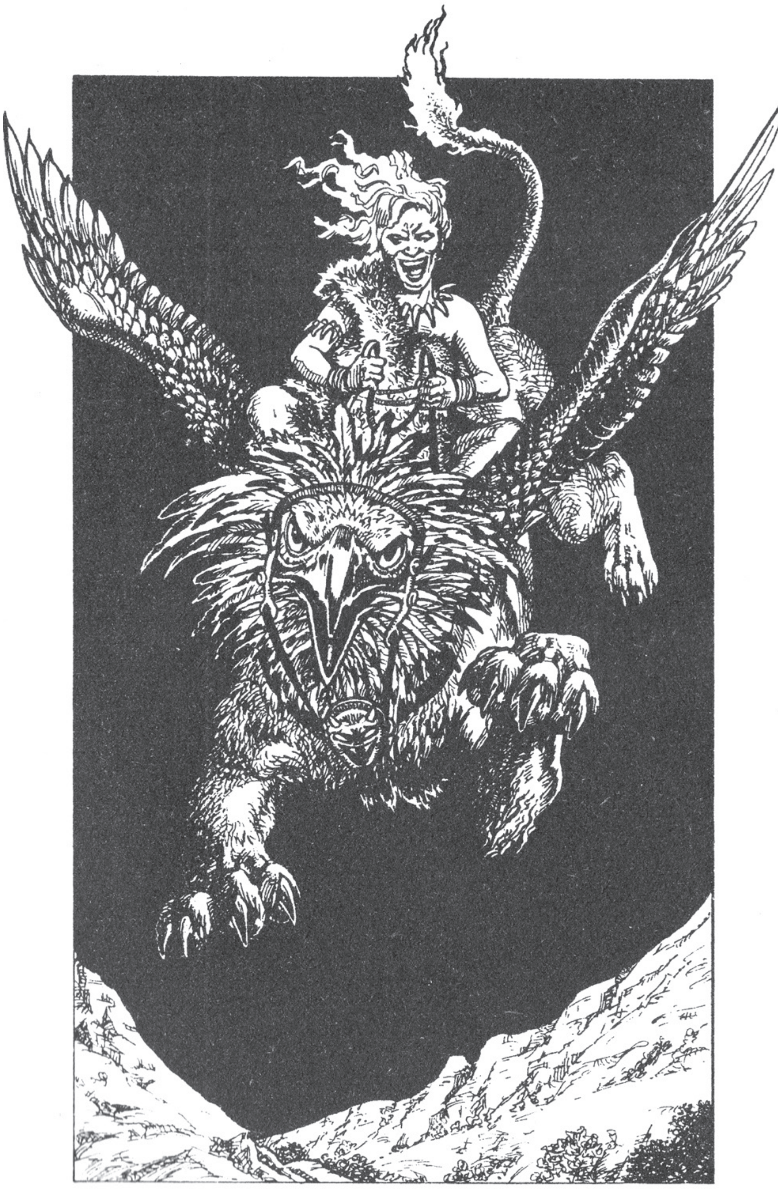
154
The true villain of the piece turns to dust in the Throne Room.

• The name of Meghan-na-Durr, deadly daughter of the Vizier Chingiz, recalls the name of the Sultana of Egypt at the start of the Mamluk period, Shajar al-Durr ('string of pearls' in Arabic). Meghan is a form of the name Megan, a variant of the name Margaret, which also means 'pearl' in Greek (μαργαρίτης).

155
The hero has arrived in the city of Sharrabbas on the back of a cart.

• The cart-driver, Flaxwort, has a botanical name (another of several such names in *Daggers of Darkness*) composed of *flax* (*Linum usitatissimum*) and *wort*, an English element meaning 'plant'.

• Ah, Sharrabbas, a city dominated by its Fortress! In this case the Fortress appears based on the Prince Viridel Kerithrion-occupied fortress of the Elven Council, being assaulted by the forces of King



Opposite page: *Midnight Rogue* (271)
Above: *Crypt of the Sorcerer* (178)

Glorien Thelemas, in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* p.94 (large format)/p.216 (small format).

• Again, we can also see nods to Kharé (at 132) in building shape and structure, including window glazing, thatched roofs, and chimney tops, and even the figure lurking at the open window.

• Finally, more influences can be seen from Kharé (at 89) in this picture of the Gambling Halls of Vlada. The conical tower with the weather vane on the left side of John Blanche's picture has its twin in Martin McKenna's work, lurking in the central mid-ground, just below the Fortress.

156
Walking along a tunnel the hero is set upon by a Necromancer named Sigismuh.

• The name of Sigismuh, one of Chingiz's Necromancers, is likely inspired by the Germanic name Sigismund, which has been held by various kings and princes in history, most famously Sigismund, king of Bohemia and Hungary, and Holy Roman Emperor (1368-1437).

172
The hero is flown by Greyfeather to the Boulyanthrop eyrie.

• In this illustration, the head of the Boulyanthrop Bird Man is obviously borrowed from the Barbarian girl's flying Griffin steed in *Crypt of the Sorcerer*, particularly the crest of longer feathers emanating out from the back of the skull.

176

Waking up, the hero finds themselves amongst the people of Uruz.

- The Kazanid tribe and settlement Uruz is named after Khan Uruz, son of Khan Kazan, in the story of *How Prince Uruz Son of Prince Kazan was Taken Prisoner* in *The Book of Dede Korkut*, source of some of the most evocative names in *Daggers of Darkness*.

179

The hero makes use of a herb in order to escape from the assassin.

- As with 10, there is an error in the deduction of STAMINA points for the use of the herb as dictated in paragraph 130. The player should lose 3 STAMINA as opposed to 1.

187

The hero is fired upon by the slave-guards as a Goblin climbs to assail the hero.

- Here we see Kazanid slave-guard archers modelled entirely on marauding Hobgoblins from *Crypt of the Sorcerer* paragraph 226. In addition, the snail at the bottom has its twin in *The Crown of Kings* (Jackson, 1985) paragraph 304.

191

Throwing down the gauntlet, the hero enters battle with Urgenj.

- Urgenj, a Kazanid warrior of the Korkut clan, is named after Urgench, a city in Uzbekistan and an older city in Turkmenistan. Urgench was relocated after the Amu Darya river changed its course in the 16th century.

200

The Marauders are unsure of the hero and trial by combat is decided upon.

- In this illustration of the camp of Beshbalik's Marauders, the warriors obviously prefer roasted piglet to the wild duck and mushroom stew served up by the hunter Symm in *Crypt of the Sorcerer* paragraph 103!

200

A Necromancer calls up a wall of water in order to flush out the hero from the crowd.

- The wave conjured up by a Necromancer in a Kazanid river valley is impressive, but still a pale imitation of the great wall of water that destroyed the continent of Atlantis in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* p.112 (large format)/p.262 (small format)!

255

The hero has made it to the town of Torrez only to fall victim to misfortune.

- The name of the Kazanid trading town, Torrez, is perhaps based on Torez (also Thorez), a city in the Ukraine.

256

Plans to break into the fortress have gone awry as the hero faces down a Necromancer.

- The Black Poison of Lisz, used by the Necromancers of Kazan, brings to mind the name of the Hungarian pianist Frank Liszt (1811-1886). One of Liszt's pupils, Olga Janina (dubbed the 'Cossack Countess', although she was nothing of the sort), fell in love with him and, when their brief affair ended, she threatened to shoot Liszt and poison herself.

260

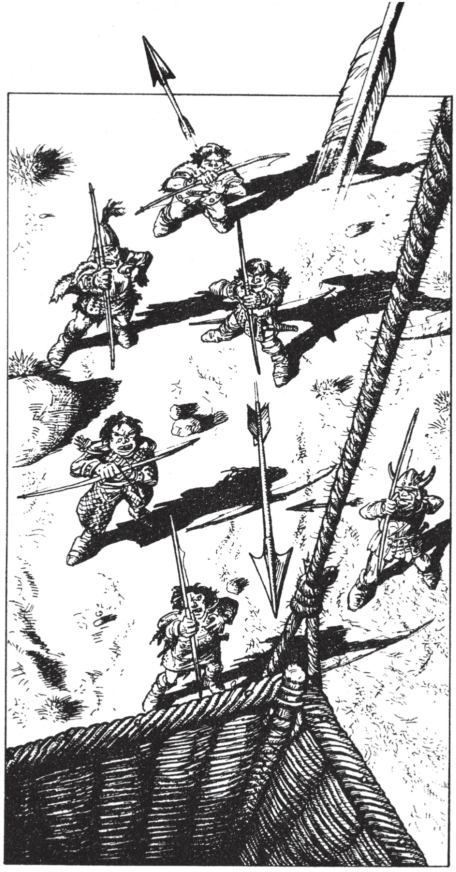
Plans to break into the fortress have gone awry as the hero faces down a Necromancer.

- Elements of these Gargoyles which infest the outer surface of the Sharrabbas Fortress can be found in John Sibbick's much maligned cover for *Midnight Rogue* and also inside the book at paragraph 225.

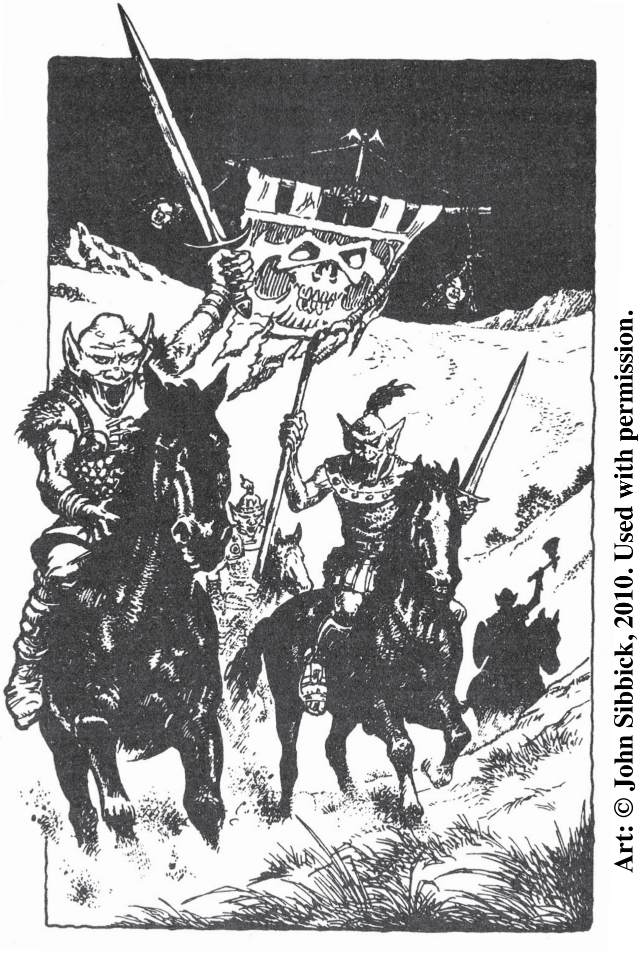
267

The hero comes to the aid of a dying woman who is more than she appears.

- Barabba of the West Moor was one of Segrek's Select. Her name is based on that of the biblical Barabbas (in Aramaic Bar-abbâ, 'son of the father'), who was freed, in preference to Jesus, by Pontius Pilate.
- The Hulugu Kazanid clan is named after the grandson of the Mongolian Genghis (Chinggis) Khan, Hulagu



Above: *Crypt of the Sorcerer* (226)
Below: *Crypt of the Sorcerer* (391)
Opposite page: The 'Creature' from *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and *Crypt of the Sorcerer* (139)



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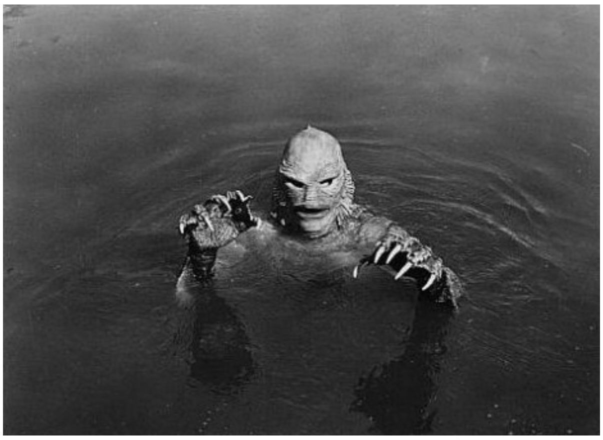
Khan (also Hulegu, Hulugu), who founded the Ilkhanate of Persia (see Background).

270
A metal rod quickly leads the hero into a deadly underwater fight for survival.

- Elements of the aquatic horror known as the Elkeim are obviously based on the Gill-man from the classic movie *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), including head and gill structure, and even the finger and claw positioning of the beast's left hand.



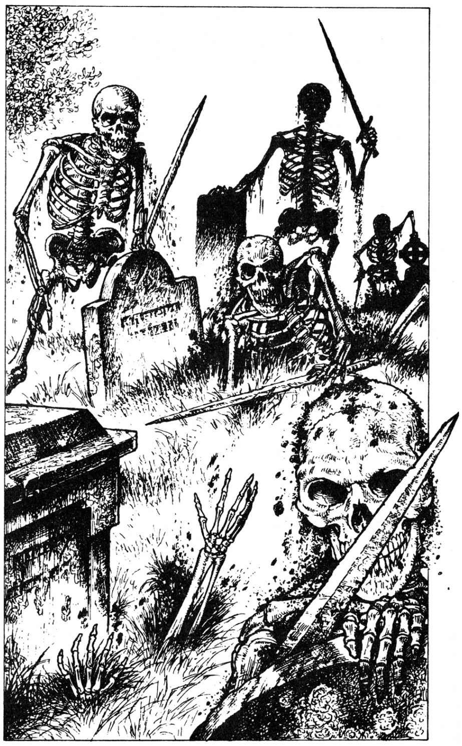
Creature from the Black Lagoon: © Universal, 1954.

285
In the throne room all is revealed to the hero, who is then threatened by four Ogres.

- John Sibbick's Ogre from *Midnight Rogue* paragraph 328 is a big influence on those that are chained to the Throne of Sharrabbas. In addition, the back of the Throne shows four of the sacred animals of Kazan: the Bull of Uruz, the Eagle of Hulugu, the Fangtiger of Yigenik, and the Horse of Bogomil. Missing are the Snake of Korkut, and the Dragon of Kazilik. Lastly, the symbol of Puffin Books (founded 1940) can also be seen on the Throne!

285
The hero meets up with some allies in a tavern and learns that the hero is the region's only hope.

- In this picture of the interior of *The Dragon's Wings* tavern, the absent-minded wizard Geronicus bears a striking resemblance to the wizard Arakor Nicodemus of Port Blacksand (although Nicodemus does not appear to tolerate small rodents living in his robe-pockets) as illustrated by Iain McCaig in *City of Thieves* (Livingstone, 1983)!
- Also, the background of tavern shows some similarities to *The Spotted Dog* tavern on Market Street in Port Blacksand, especially the candles, the drinker's posture, and the Dwarf at the bar (see paragraph 62 of *City of Thieves*).



303
The hero gains help from an unexpected source while in peril within Owlshriek Forest.

- Owlshriek, the dark forest in the shadows of the Lesser Ilkhans, is another name in Kazan which is inspired by the natural world, although no Owls are encountered there (or elsewhere in *Daggers of Darkness*).

310
The snow-bridges collapse and the ground begins to vibrate as a Tusker Mammoth lurches forward.

- These two Kazanid horsemen accompanying an immense Tusker Mammoth are based on the horse-riding Goblins of the Moonstone Hills in *Crypt of the Sorcerer* paragraph 391. Also, the archer perched on the Mammoth's back appears to be yet another nod to the Hobgoblin bowmen from *Crypt of the Sorcerer* 226.

314
Walking along a path by a stream, the hero encounters an old crone.

- The name of the witch, Gehlehna, brings to mind the name Gehenna (also called the Vale of Hinnom), one of the valleys surrounding the Old City of Jerusalem, which has become synonymous with Hell in both Judaism and Islam.

322
The hero attempts to avoid a strange creature by hiding in the reeds.

- The birds circling in the sky above are from 1. Of more interest is the immense wooden Kalamite, whose body, face, and stance are drawn from the Wood Golem of the beautiful witch Alianna in the Shamutanti Hills of Kakhabad in *The Shamutanti Hills* (Jackson, 1983) paragraph 87.

334
Waking up in a graveyard, the hero finds themselves the prisoner of a Necromancer.

- This picture of a Kazanid Necromancer summoning the undead host that causes the Death from a Thousand Cuts is taken from at least three separate sources. Firstly, as we can see, the overall layout of the tombs and graves borrows from the haunted graveyard in *Crypt of the Sorcerer* paragraph 139 that contains the remains of Tamal, father of much-loathed Razaak
- Secondly, the Necromancer is inspired partly by the Dark Elf Princess Velicoma Kerithrion, High Priestess of Myurr in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* p.98 (large format)/p.224 (small format)!
- Finally, the undead creature in the foreground draws partly on the Ghoul from the graveyard of Greyguilds-on-the-Moor in *Talisman of Death* (Jamie Thomson & Mark Smith, 1984) paragraph 34.

358
The hero has reached the centre of a maze only to find the medallion is guarded.

- The Maze Fiend that lurks in this picture is based on Bill Houston's Fiend from *Temple of Terror* (Livingstone, 1985) 216. The symbols on the obelisk that bears the Medallion of Korkut include Shekka's Rune, a Titan equivalent of "Kilroy was here" (usually called 'Chad' in the UK), a male fertility symbol, part of Martin McKenna's old signature (which you can see in his work for *Warlock* magazine such as the Dryaden picture on page 8 of this issue), and what looks like a mark for the band Dead Kennedys, though it is missing the central vertical bar.

396
A procession is taking place and the hero moves to get a better view.

- In this picture of a surprisingly lightly-guarded procession featuring the palanquin of the murderous vizier Chingiz, we find that the citizens of both Sharrabbas and Kharé share a fancy for bone-adorned floppy-brimmed hats as seen in *Kharé –Cityport of Traps* paragraph 269!
- Also in this picture, the two Gremlin archers riding on the vizier Chingiz's palanquin are modelled on one of the Troglodytes playing the *Run of the Arrow* in *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World* p.83 (large format)/p.185 (small format).

397
A wizard disguised as a Gryphawk brings a message for the hero from Astragal.

- The name of the wizard Icaricus recalls several names from Greek mythology, including Icarus, son of Daedalus (who flew too close to the sun) and Icarius, father of Penelope (wife of Odysseus). **FF**

turn to

Fighting Fantazine invites you to take part in a survey of *Fighting Fantasy* adventures...

We here at *Fighting Fantazine* thought it might be interesting to undertake a survey of fan opinion on the *Fighting Fantasy* series, as to our knowledge no such comprehensive poll has ever really been taken before. Given that over two hundred people appear to be enjoying this fanzine we felt that if even only half respond to the survey it will provide some interesting results (not an excuse to not fill it out and send it in!). This then is a survey by fans for fans! However, in a small addendum to that, Wizard Books expressed an interest in the results when informed about the planned survey. As a result of this they have agreed to put up prizes if they were then supplied with a copy of the (anonymous) results.

Meanwhile much opinion of which titles have constituted both 'good' or 'bad' books has been passed down by uber-fans since *Fighting Fantasy* fandom first dragged itself onto the internet and began making connections. Per Jorner's *Fighting Fantasy* Review site carries a wealth of opinion from that period and beyond and it makes for interesting reading. But do the majority of fans actually agree with those reviews and opinions? *Fighting Fantazine* decided it was time to find out!

So, here's what you need to do in order for your votes to count. Just give a mark out of '10' for each of the adventures, manuals or novels listed below. A '10' should be given to those which you feel are the 'best of the best', with a '1' awarded to any you feel aren't even worth the paper they are printed on (perish the thought!). There are no rules about how many 10s or 1s you can give out, or any marks in between for that matter. Each mark is entirely up to YOU!

For the full-length solo gamebooks we've made it a little more complicated. Instead of an *overall* mark for each of the now seventy titles in the series, you award a mark out of '10' for each of the following attributes: Plot, Gameplay, Atmosphere, and Illustrations. 'Plot' is how interesting a tale you think is being spun by the writer. 'Gameplay' is how well the game mechanics have been balanced. 'Atmosphere' is how well the writer has written the book. 'Illustrations' is how well you think the cover and interior art serve the book. These four marks will then be used to determine an overall score for each book.

If you haven't read all the adventures, manuals or novels, don't worry. Just give a mark to those you have actually read, and leave a blank space for any that you don't feel able to give an opinion on. The final marks will be expressed as an average score, determined by a proportionate tally, so those books that may attract fewer votes, won't be unfairly discriminated against.

Once you've *completed* your voting form (please note address information is collected *purely* for the purpose of providing Wizard Books with the address of the prize winner and for the fanzine so as to give a breakdown of which countries readers come from – your information *will not* be passed onto other parties) and answered the other short questions, email the completed survey to **fightingfantazine@gmail.com** by July 2nd 2010. One entrant will be chosen at random to win a selection of goodies kindly supplied by Wizard Books, including a copy of *Night of the Necromancer*, a signed copy of the 25th Anniversary Edition of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* and a bookmark. The winner will be notified in August and results published next issue. **FF**

DETAILS

Name: ____________________

Postal Address:

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____

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Gender: **Male** ○ **Female** ○

Under 15 ○ **15~20** ○ **21~30** ○
31~40 ○ **41~50** ○ **51+** ○

What year did you become a fan? __________

FIGHTING FANTASY FAVOURITES

Please list your three favourite authors:

1) ____________________

2) ____________________

3) ____________________

Please list your three favourite pieces of cover art (list the name of the book):

1) ____________________

2) ____________________

3) ____________________

Please list your three favourite pieces of full page interior art (list the name of the book and the related paragraph number):

1) ____________________

2) ____________________

paragraph 400

This is a survey in which **YOU** are the hero!

3) ______________________________

Please list your three favourite artists overall:

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

Please list your three favourite villains:

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

Please list your three favourite monsters/aliens:

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

Who do you think has made the biggest/most important/ most influential contribution to the series and what was it?

____

____

____

____

FIGHTING FANTASY WISH LIST

Which three books from the Puffin series as yet not reissued by Wizard would you like to see back in print?

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

Please list the three previous *Fighting Fantasy* authors you would like to see return to the range to pen a new book:

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

Please list a non-*Fighting Fantasy* author you think might work well with the series:

____

In which part of Titan would you like to see the next gamebook set?

____

Fighting Fantasy has in the past occasionally tackled non-fantasy adventures: Please indicate *yes* or *no* to wanting to see new books in the following genres:

	Y	N		Y	N
Sci-Fi	○	○	Horror	○	○
Superhero	○	○	War	○	○
Crime	○	○	Espionage	○	○

THE FANZINE

Please list your three favourite features (interview, article, column, mini adventure, fiction, report etc.) to date (list feature name and issue number):

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

Please list your three favourite pieces of *fan* art (list issue and page number):

1) ______________________________

2) ______________________________

3) ______________________________

What sort of material would you like to see in future issues of the fanzine?

____

____

____

____

GAMEBOOKS

	Plot	Gameplay	Atmosphere	Illustrations
The Warlock of Firetop Mountain				
The Citadel of Chaos				
The Forest of Doom				
Starship *Traveller*				
City of Thieves				
The Shamutanti Hills				
Deathtrap Dungeon				
Island of the Lizard King				
Kharé – Cityport of Traps				
Scorpion Swamp				
Caverns of the Snow Witch				
House of Hell				
The Seven Serpents				
Talisman of Death				
The Crown of Kings				
Space Assassin				
Freeway Fighter				
Temple of Terror				
The Rings of Kether				
Seas of Blood				
Appointment with F.E.A.R.				
Rebel Planet				
Demons of the Deep				
Sword of the Samurai				
Trial of Champions				
The Warrior's Way				
The Warlock's Way				
Robot Commando				
Masks of Mayhem				
Creature of Havoc				
Beneath Nightmare Castle				

	Plot	Gameplay	Atmosphere	Illustrations
Crypt of the Sorcerer				
Star Strider				
Phantoms of Fear				
Midnight Rogue				
Chasms of Malice				
Battleblade Warrior				
Slaves of the Abyss				
Sky Lord				
Stealer of Souls				
Daggers of Darkness				
Armies of Death				
Portal of Evil				
Vault of the Vampire				
Fangs of Fury				
Dead of Night				
Master of Chaos				
Black Vein Prophecy				
The Keep of the Lich-Lord				
Legend of the Shadow Warriors				
Spectral Stalkers				
Tower of Destruction				
The Crimson Tide				
Moonrunner				
Siege of Sardath				
Return to Firetop Mountain				
Island of the Undead				
Night Dragon				
Spellbreaker				
Legend of Zagor				
Deathmoor				
Knights of Doom				

	Plot	Gameplay	Atmosphere	Illustrations
Magehunter				
Revenge of the Vampire				
Curse of the Mummy				
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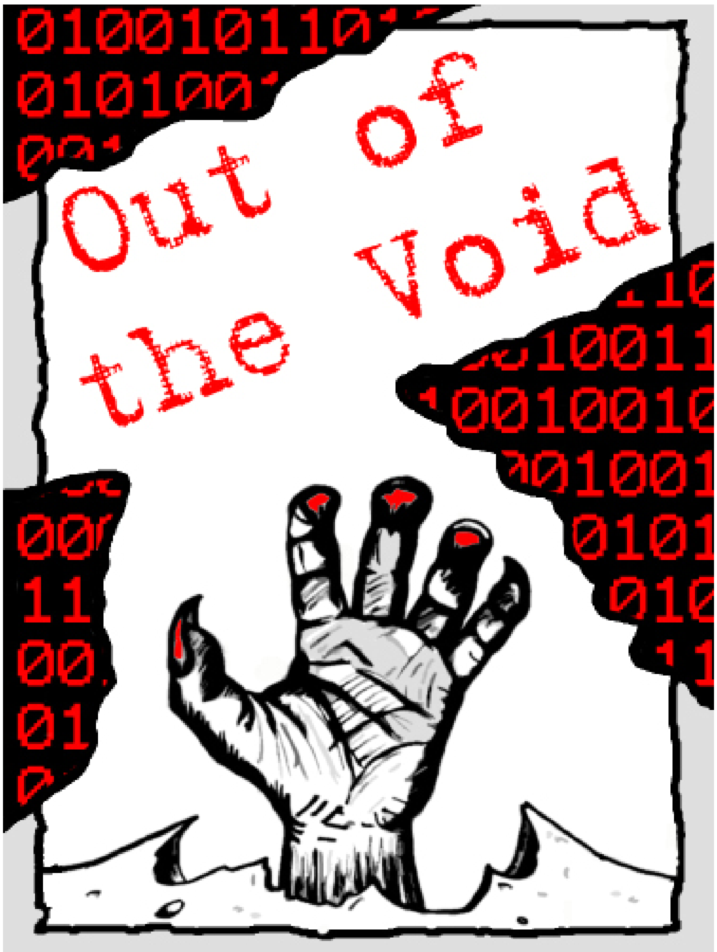
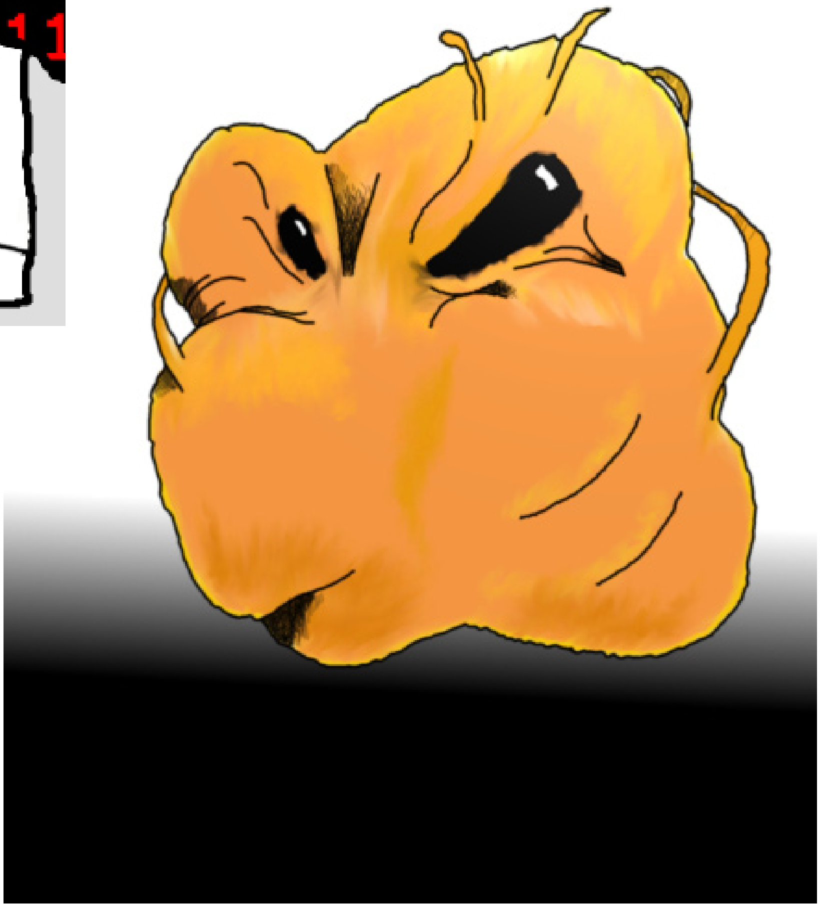
Mudworm Swamp				
Ghost Road				
OTHER				
Eye of the Dragon *(mini version)*				
The Sorcery Spell Book				
Caverns of the Snow Witch *(mini version)*				
The House of Hell *(mini version)*				
Market Mayhem				
In Search of the Mungies' Gold				
The Tasks of Tantalon				
Casket of Souls				
In Search of the Lost Land				
The *Fighting Fantasy* Poster Book				
The *Fighting Fantasy* 10th Anniversary Yearbook				
The Warlock of Firetop Mountain (25th Anniversay)				



by **Andrew Wright**

With Kieran Coghlan's excellent *Prey of the Hunter* adventure blasting science-fiction back into *Fighting Fantasy* territory, we thought we'd follow suit over here at the *Out of the Pit* Institute for Monster Studies. So, for the third issue of *Fighting Fantazine* we present *Out of the Void* – a selection of sci-fi beasties from previous adventures, rewritten by Alexander Ballingall, Marcus Bone, and yours truly. Alexander Ballingall also kindly provided the illustrations. Thanks guys! Don't forget to submit your own creatures for inclusion in *Out of the Pit*. Make sure they conform to the format presented here and send them to me, Andrew Wright, the *Out of the Pit* Editor, at **greyarea13@hotmail.com** – I look forward to reading your fearsome and fiendish contributions!

In this issue we give you **Out of the Void** – a mini-bestiary of aliens drawn from across the multiverse and beyond. Each illustrated alien entry is broken down into two sections: one concerns game statistics, and the other is a longer description of the creature and its special features. The statistics* listed for each alien are: SKILL, STAMINA, Attacks, Weapon Used, Habitat, Number Encountered, Type, Reaction and Intelligence.



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>> TRANSMISSION INTERCEPT.
ATTACHED: DIGITAL VIDEO FILE SEQUENCE: ENCOUNTER1A.MPEG (FILE SIZE: 22.3MB, RUNTIME: APPROX 31MINS)

"Grainy video footage shows the manned probe vessel *Velox* approach the PhinCom commercial satellite, which appears to have been damaged by meteorites. Alongside the satellite is the repair vessel *Crocuta*. *Velox* docks with the satellite, and the crew – Captain Skyme, Navigator Velski, and Pilot Wu – enter the airlock to meet representatives of the repair ship. There is only one rep present – a tall human in blue coveralls that read Scrap Officer Daro. Bizarrely, his eyes glow bright orange! Captain Skyme reaches forward to shake Daro's hand..."

DIGITAL FOOTAGE ENDS

Art: © Alexander Ballingall, 2010

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*An explanation of all these statistics (except "Weapon Used") can be found in the original *Out of the Pit* (p.15/11-13. See also *Warlock* #7 p.10-11). An explanation of the "Weapon Used" category can be found in *Dungeoneer* (p.153-156 and 164-165).

VALCRETIAN SURPRISE

by Martin Allen (*Sky Lord*) and Andrew Wright

SKILL: - (see below)
STAMINA: 13 (see below)
ATTACKS: 1
WEAPONS USED: Slimey Touch (see below)
HABITAT: Valcretis (Valcretian system), Meteors, Comets, Abandoned spacecraft, satellites, and star-stations
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1 (Initially...)
TYPE: Slime
REACTION: Friendly (see below) or Hostile
INTELLIGENCE: High

Best known from its role in the destruction of the United Starstation *Diaboliclese*, the VALCRETIAN SURPRISE is a highly dangerous and invasive alien life-form. Its natural form is a brilliant orange jelly-like blob, and in this state it is often disparagingly referred to as a 'nasty great jellybean'. Such insults are false bravado though, used by hardened spacers to disguise the fear they feel upon encountering the Valcretian Surprise and its many awesome powers.

The orange blob is a shape-changer, capable of flexing itself into any shape required, from shambling semi-human to completely impersonating a normal human being. In the latter stage however, it often gives itself away with its bright orange eyes – though they may "wear" their victims' uniforms, Valcretian Surprises wearing space goggles or sunglasses have yet to be encountered. Despite this, it is highly intelligent, capable of speech (which it often uses in human form to lure and reassure its victims), and, strangely, possesses superb driving skills for handling small space transport vehicles like motorised trolleys and three-wheeled scooters.

Most frighteningly, the Valcretian Surprise is immune and impervious to any damage caused by energy, projectile or melee weapons. Instead, the only known way of harming it is to hurl space junk at the creature, which will then devour it, and pray that the combined toxicity of all the garbage kills or immobilises the creature. A comprehensive study by Sky Lord Jang Mistral of Ensulina during the assault on the *Diaboliclese* reveals the following data on which junk works best:

Space Junk as Weapon Effectiveness on Valcretian Surprises

Highly Effective 3 STAMINA damage	**Average, I Guess** 2 STAMINA damage	**Almost Useless** 1 STAMINA damage
tibia bone, cinnamon stick	compressed-air canister, chewing gum, hypodermic syringe, electrostatic inducer, oxygen cylinder, laminex sheet, leg of mutton, medicine ball, strawberries, plastic hose, fire-extinguisher, ball bearings, poison, can of beer, box of cigars	flare pistol, chain, wrist-watch, club, robot's metal arm, acid bottle, jar with pickled brain, grease-gun, flame torch, 3-D pictoscope, viscous negator, chair, blancmange, carving knife, teapot, snooker cue, dumb-bell, cricket bat, skipping rope, darts, pot plant, shovel, weed-killer, broom, wrench, hammer, sonic screwdriver, multifacetous aciduator, revolver, peak cap, axe

Based on Mistral's research, Solar Trooper weapons manufacturers are now designing projectile guns featuring calcium and cinnamon-based ammunition for use against the orange blobs. Combat between spacers and a Valcretian Surprise is simply a case of listing all the junk thrown by the spacers at the creature and consulting the table above. If the cumulative damage caused is 13 STAMINA points or greater, the spacers have slain the blob. If it is less, the surviving blob slays all the spacers!

It does this by enveloping its victims in an unrelenting slimey grip and devouring them piece by piece, leaving behind a jumble of bones and whatever equipment and clothing the poor unfortunates had on them at the time. Allegedly, death by Valcretian Surprise is completely painless, but the spectacle of it is such that it often drives any survivors totally insane. Such homicidal maniacs form a secondary hazard to areas infected by Valcretian Surprises, stalking the abandoned passageways of their former workplace and attacking all they encounter, believing them to be "agents of the blob"! (As an addendum to this, plant-life and robots of any shape are ignored by the creatures, though no one knows if it is because they are not considered to be either food or a threat, or their forms are unfamiliar and unrecognizable to the blobs.)

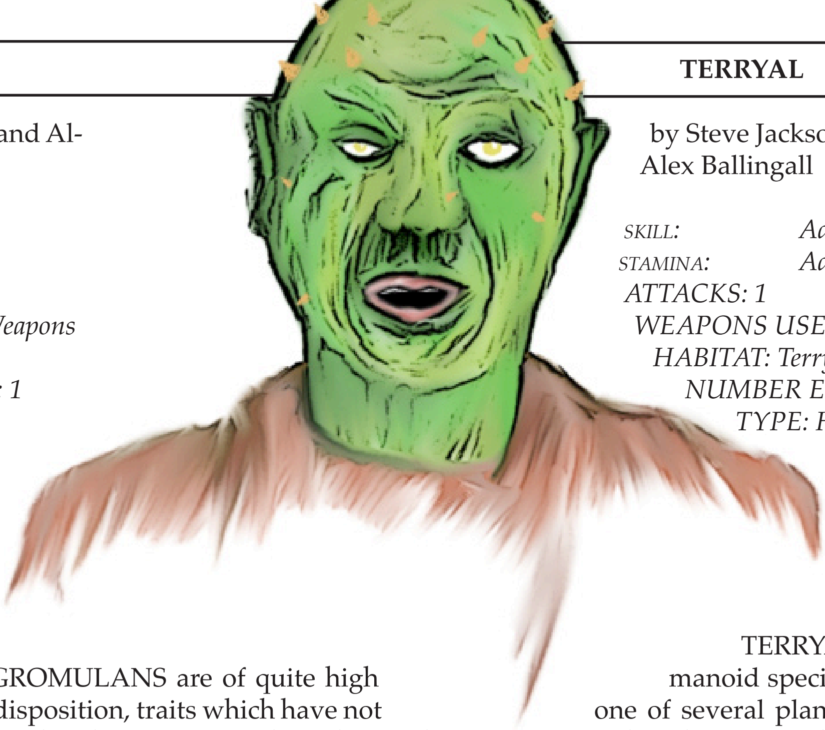
Valcretian Surprises are categorized as aggressive hegemonizing organisms. One will attach itself to an isolated but relatively populated area and begin devouring the inhabitants. After a certain number of victims have been consumed (no one knows quite how many), the monster will begin breeding via parthenogenesis, budding off young blobs that resemble orange snooker balls. These will then begin feeding and reproducing exponentially until the entire area has been overrun. Entire cities, space habitats, and sometimes small planets have had to be destroyed via nuclear or anti-matter weaponry following blob infestations that grew completely out of control!

Valcretian Surprises hail originally from the barren world of Valcretis, where their primitive ancestral forms can still be found lurking about in subterranean cavern systems. Some xenobiologists speculate that an unknown race, possibly the unscrupulous molluscoid Deik, experimented on these creatures, imbuing them with sentience and much else besides, to work as miners in the caves. Before long, the Valcretian Surprises slew their captors and spread through the stars, as one more hideous danger to be faced by all who prowl the space-lanes seeking fame and fortune!

GROMULAN

by Luke Sharp (*Star Strider*) and Alexander Ballingall

SKILL: 10
STAMINA: 10
ATTACKS: 1
WEAPONS USED: Energy Weapons
HABITAT: Earth (Sol System)
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1
TYPE: Humanoid
REACTION: Hostile
INTELLIGENCE: High



A formerly nomadic species of humanoid, after the loss of their original home-world in the mists of unrecorded time, GROMULANS are of quite high intelligence and of a hostile disposition, traits which have not changed in the long time that they have used Earth as their new home, following the Earthling exodus to Alphacent. The intelligence of the species has manifested itself in the form of developing amazing android and illusion-based technology as both a means of defence and attack. It has also resulted in some arrogance about their metal abilities, willing to test those whom they feel may meet their standards of intellect to games that rely on intelligence and skill, such as the Earthling pastime of Chess. This arrogance also extends to their security precautions, with many of the layers of protection for their more important assets based on tests of logic and intelligence.

As a part of their hostile approach to life, they are quite paranoid and take many precautions with their own safety, going as far as building deactivation points in all their androids for fear of revolt by the machines. The paranoia extends as far as revulsion at being touch by non-Gromulans. The hostility is a hard learnt lesson at the hands of less upright members of the galaxy and now quite ingrained in the species. Despite this hostility and paranoia, they are willing to deal with other species as long as it is in their best interests and does not compromise their safety in any way. This has led to them being labelled as terrorists for hire, their most recent kidnapping of President Xerin of Galaxy One Federation for the Empire of the Purple Flag simply another example in a long list.

In human terms they are considered to be quite ugly, resembling short, squat figures. They quite often use their illusion technology to project images of themselves as tall and thin, suggesting that they are vain as well as paranoid and intelligent. Beyond their shape, they have a slightly-spiked reptilian skin that does allow for them to blush and a short stubby nose. They have no body hair to speak of. The children are on a smaller scale, but are to be considered just as hostile and as adept at using illusions as the adult Gromulans.

In all respects it is recommended that people keep their interaction with Gromulans on an "as needed" basis in order to preserve both their life and their sanity.

This *Hitch-Hiker's Guide* entry was dictated by Ford Prefect.

TERRYAL

by Steve Jackson (*Spaceship Traveller*) and Alex Ballingall

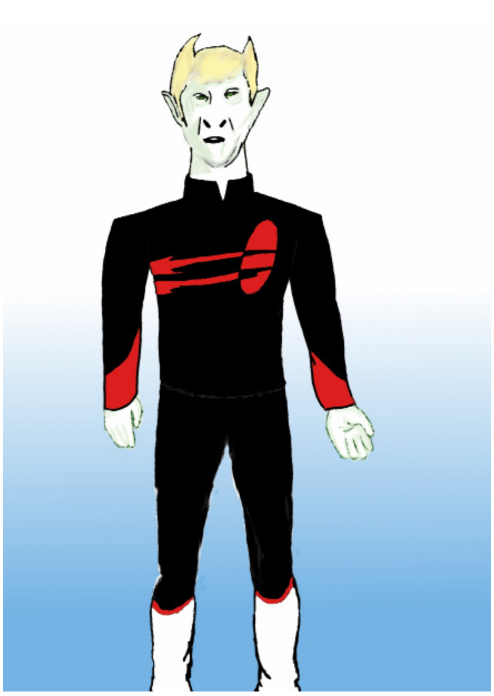
SKILL: Adult: 6 Young: 8
STAMINA: Adult: 10 Young: 5
ATTACKS: 1
WEAPONS USED: Energy Weapons
HABITAT: Terryal-6 (Terryal system)
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1-6
TYPE: Humanoid
REACTION: Hostile (Adult) Friendly (Young)
INTELLIGENCE: Low (Adult) High (Young)

TERRYALS are the native humanoid species of the planet Terryal-6, one of several planets in the Terryal system that is located on the other side of the Seltsian Void. The planet Terryal-6 itself is now largely used for industry, agriculture, and the farming of animals in order to support the large population that lives on the expansive platforms that float above the surface of the planet.

In appearance the Terryals are tall and extremely thin, easily reaching heights in excess of 180cm upon maturity. They have a white skin free of any of the browning pigmentation that one would expect to see as the result of living under such unparalleled exposure to sunlight through life on the platforms, leading to suspicions of modifications to the species' genome. Their faces are of an elongated nature with the underlying bone structure far more prominent than other humanoid species from the same region of space.

They are an advanced species as immediately evident from the massive floating city platforms that house the population. Investigations have however also revealed advanced progress in the areas of astronomy and computers, as well as methods of dealing with injuries and afflictions. It is this last point that suggests the power structure of the planet is possibly the result of their own genetic tinkering as it is hard to see how this situation could have developed otherwise.

This power structure is one in which the Terryal offspring, or children, run the planet with the



mature Terryals acting mostly as an indifferent underclass. The set up is the result of two factors that now feature as part of the species' development to maturity. The first factor is that the children are born with an abnormally high intelligence and physical abilities, when compared with human development, putting them easily in the upper reaches of human genius. This is balanced by the second developmental factor, that as they age they become increasingly senile and unreliable. It is here postulated that such senility, a possible Terryal equivalent of Alzheimer's disease, begins at birth but only achieves a rapid onset of symptoms upon reaching puberty.

The nature of such a debilitating condition results in the noted divide in the social structure between the scientific advancements of the youth and the more pedestrian and mundane pursuits of the adults. This dichotomy extends to their interactions with other species as well. The children, with their non-violent gestures and attitude, are contrasted by the hostile stance of the adults which can easily degenerate into violence when they are pressed. This violence is possibly a result of the encroaching senility. As a result it is recommended that any future interactions with the Terryals are kept to dealings with the young.

This report on Terryals was filed by the Captain of the starship *Traveller* upon return to Earth space and now resides permanently in the AstroNavy Hall of Records.

THARN DOPPELGÄNGER

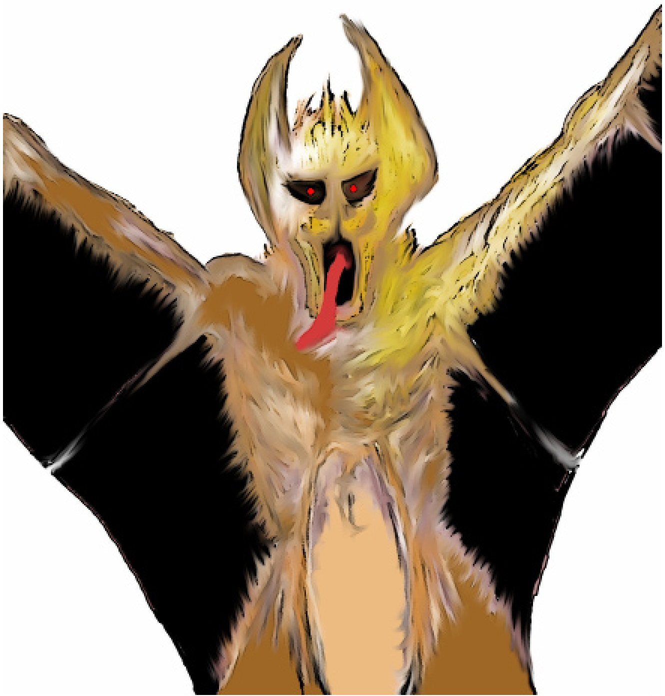
by Andrew Chapman (*Space Assassin*) and Marcus Bone

SKILL: 8 (see below)
STAMINA: 6
ATTACKS: 2
WEAPONS USED: Large Claw, Large Bite
HABITAT: Tharn (Orthos system)
NUMBER ENCOUNTERED: 1-3
TYPE: Mammal (Chiropteromorph)
REACTION: Friendly/Hostile (see below)
INTELLIGENCE: High

These aggressive bat-like creatures are native to the planet Tharn, a small outer rim planet in the Orthos system. Known for their shape-changing and chameleon abilities, they also possess a deadly bite and destructive talons.

In their natural form, adult THARN DOPPELGÄNGERS average around 2 metres in height, and resemble enormous bats – complete with large leathery wings that they can use to glide short distances. Their finger bones are flexible, allowing them to bend without splintering - an attribute that makes them deadly weapons – while their small teeth are razor sharp. While they lack the sonar-like abilities of their look-alikes, their ears are extremely sensitive to high pitched sounds. They are also meat eaters and seem to especially savour human flesh, although have been known to also resort to cannibalism if forced.

When the first colonists arrived on Tharn they believed that the planet, rich in minerals and ores, was almost totally devoid of life. With a barely breathable atmosphere, who could have guessed otherwise? What they didn't expect was that



the most advanced of the planet's few native inhabitants had almost immediately begun integrating themselves into the human colonies. From day one, the cunning Doppelgängers had discovered that by isolating and killing individual colonists, they could replace the dead with their own – allowing them access to yet more humans.

In fact, it wasn't until one of the creatures – who at the time was mimicking a miner – was exposed to the high-pitched modulating tone of the pit drills that their existence was discovered. The sound, harmless to human ears, drove the creature mad, forcing it to assume its nature shape. Even then the creature was difficult to stop, and only the timely intervention of mine security ensured no other deaths.

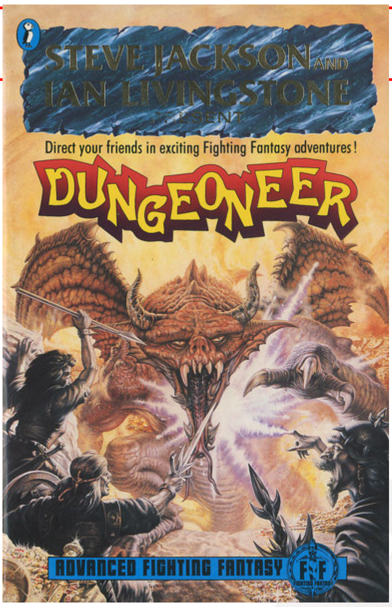
Once the true threat of the Doppelgänger was discovered it still took the colonists months to uncover all of the creatures in their midst. In fact, so deadly was the threat of these mimics that the home worlds ordered the colony to be abandoned until more was known about this aberration.

What makes the Tharn Doppelgängers stand out amongst other predators is that they are intelligent creatures, able to quickly pick up the speech and thought patterns of the creatures they are mimicking. While not capable of higher scientific or philosophical thought, they can comprehend simple arithmetic and science. These talents are so unique that a number of behaviourists actually believe that the Dopplegänger might not actually be a native of Tharn at all, but rather a race of creatures deposited there by some other intelligent culture in the past – perhaps because of the threat they pose to civilised peoples.

It should never be forgotten that these are intelligent creatures, open to reason and able to made decisions that will benefit itself in both the short and long term. No wonder then than various unscrupulous individuals have been known to use Tharn Dopplegängers as assassins and spies within the civilised worlds. This practice is highly illegal, of course, but this hasn't stopped some legitimate military forces from trying to harness the unique talents of these creatures for their own nefarious purposes.

Note: Agitated Doppelgängers (especially those exposed to high-pitched sounds) have an increase of +1 SKILL.

SPOILER WARNING: Plot spoilers for *Dungeoneer*!


STEVE JACKSON AND IAN LIVINGSTONE
Direct your friends in exciting Fighting Fantasy adventures!
DUNGEONEER
ADVANCED FIGHTING FANTASY

Ever sat and stared at your copies of the original *Fighting Fantasy* RPG books or the later *AFF* editions? Ever wondered what it might be like to actually get a group of friends together to play such adventures? **Adrian Young** presents an actual account of just such a *Fighting Fantasy* RPG campaign, featuring real Player Characters and outcomes from an adventure played over two four-hour sessions.

CHRONICLE OF HEROES:

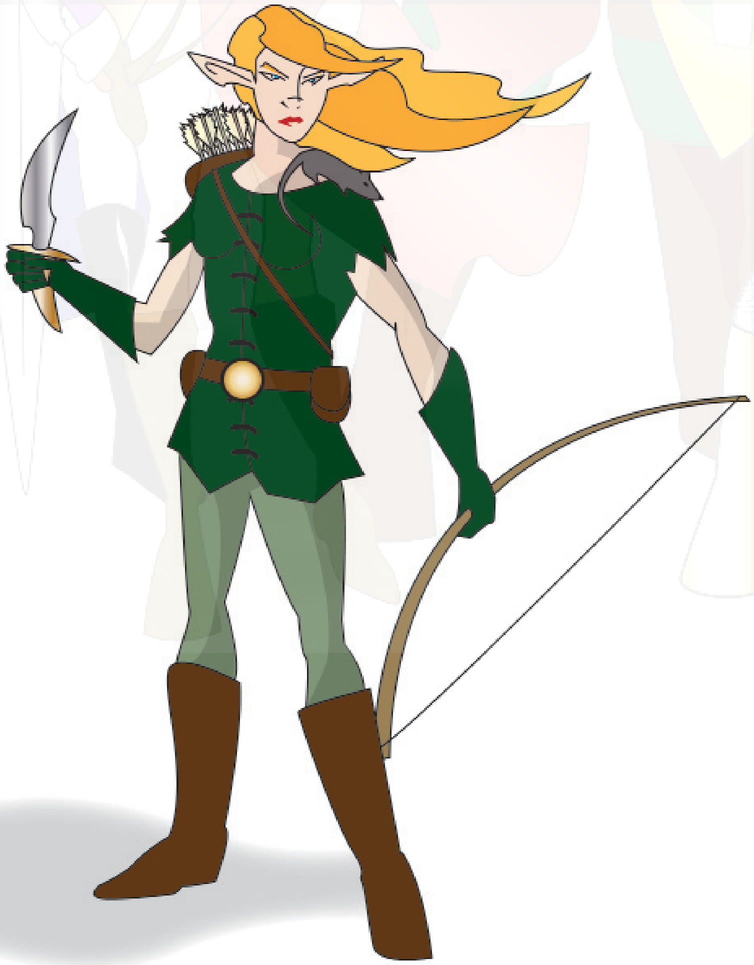
Tower of the Sorcerer

After their successful campaign against the Riddling Reaver in Kallamehr and Arantis, the Heroes decided to travel north west to Salamonis – the greatest city in all of Allansia. The young wizard Dappa joined the three fighters Ravell, Tetra and Marcellos on the long journey, whilst Silverarm bid farewell to her friends and deviated to Stonebridge to visit the great Dwarven King Gillibran. After an uneventful trek across the Allansian plains, and then by ship around the coast, the four adventurers arrived at Chalice, an emerging city-state only two days walk from Salamonis. Word of their exploits against the Reaver preceded them and they were instantly recognised and summoned to the King's chambers. There waiting with King Pindar were two other adventurers, who would join the Heroes of Kallamehr in their next quest. Their names be Alexa and E'Lantro.

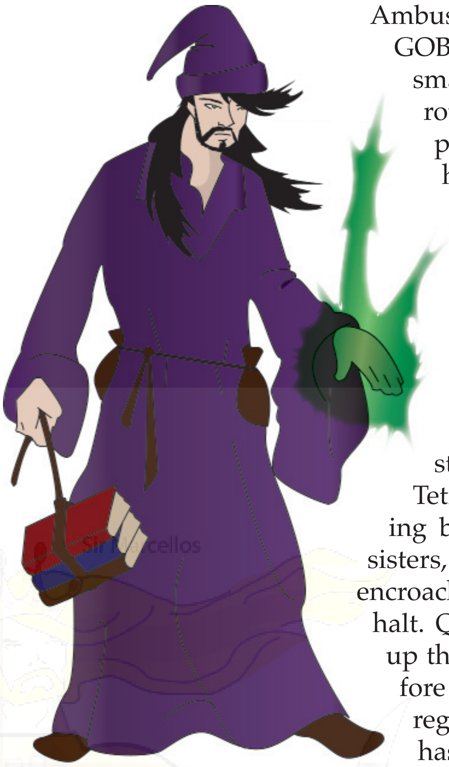
Alexa was a ninety-six year old Elven ranger from the Alkernis Forest, near the Glimmering Sea. She still remembers the day she saw 'a magical ship' glide across the water heading west. Little did she know that it was the *Twice Shy* sailing to Arantis! As a sworn protector of the forests and its inhabitants, Alexa has a love for all Galana's creatures, great and small. And she was no stranger to adventure, having already completed the Wishing Well quest, from where she obtained some fabled magical items – the Amulet of Kareep (which allowed her to speak to Mice); the Hellhound Sword and a Bag of Gold Holding (which could hold seemingly unlimited gold coins).

E'Lantro heralded from the great city of Salamonis, and like Herme, he was a recent graduate of the Great School of Wizardry. At twenty four years of age, E'Lantro had completed a thesis in *Magic as the Cleansing Fire*. His theory was that the spawning Chaos originated from the magical fires of the Abyss and thus only magic was the true counter. As an adventurer, E'Lantro tasked himself with proving it!

King Pindar quickly brought the heroes up to speed with a dire predicament. The King of Salamonis' daughter, Princess Sarissa, had been kidnapped on her way to the strategic wedding with King Pindar's son, Prince Barinjhar. An evil wizard called Xortan Throg, riding a GRIFFIN, and accompanied by GOBLINS, had ambushed her caravan and fled deep into the Darkwood Forest, north of the Catfish River. The Heroes accepted King Pindar's mission (and the handsome offer of gold coin) – rescue Princess Sarissa and save the alliance between Chalise and Salamonis. They set off immediately, guided by Barinjhar and his bodyguard Morval. Barinjhar led them to a secret entrance beneath Xortan Throg's Tower which was built into a steep, rocky crag. Rav, Marcellos, Tetra, Elantro, Alexa and Dappa entered the dark slippery tunnel, guided by Ravell using his Eyepatch of Seeing.



Art: © Nathan Stones, 2010



The Human wizard E'Lantro and on the opposite page the Elf ranger Alexa

Ambush! A horde of angry GOBLINS swarmed from small tunnels and surrounded the infiltrating party. Marcellos – with his Sword of Timakron humming – cut through a swathe of the hapless humanoids with ease. E'Lantro cast a Force Wall to hold most of the GOBLINS at bay, allowing Ravell and Dappa to dash to a staircase. It was left to Tetra and Alexa, fighting back to back like war-sisters, to bring the rest of the encroaching GOBLINS to a halt. Quickly they all bound up the Tower's staircase before the GOBLINS could regroup. But in their haste, a mighty portcullis trap was triggered. It came crashing down and Rav, who held up the rear of the party, was required to dive-roll to avoid its lethal descent. A few levels further up, and ignoring the wails of tortured prisoners and the screech of Xortan's locked up GRIFFIN, the heroes came upon the Sword Blades trap – giant stone hands, magically enchanted, holding razor sharp cutlasses. Alexa used her Amulet of Kareep to command her pet mouse to patter past the Blades. Only to see it sliced in two! As Alexa wept, E'Lantro stepped up to the plate. Summoning a vast amount of Shielding energy, he cast a protective umbrella upon the group – powerful enough to deflect the heavy and sharp Sword Blades trap!

The heroes traversed ever higher up the Tower's stone staircase until their way upward was blocked by a huge Ball of crackling and spitting Fire. But Rav cleverly ascertained that the Fire Ball was nothing but an Illusion, and in an almost mocking contempt of the magical obstacle, he strolled forward, into and through the wall of flame. The others stood back, again marvelling at the bravery that was El Ravell! Avoiding the many side passages and doors as they continued, the heroes burst through a heavy wooden door into the Guardroom, disturbing a burly OGRE and his squad of ORCS who were feasting on Human remnants. After some initial banter, it was on for young and old. Dappa remained outside as the frantic melee erupted, with tables, chairs, skewers and roasted body parts flying everywhere. But the Guards were no match against the awesomeness of E'Lantro's magic, Alexa's arrows and the combined steel of Rav, Marcellos and Tetra.

Through one more door and the heroes stood face to face with the Tower's sorcerer. In an ornately furnished throne room sat the evil hearted Xortan Throg – waiting on his ghastly skulled throne, hands already twirling with conjurations. Throg welcomed them in almost excited expectation. The heroes felt like they did when they first met the Riddling Reaver – they were hesitant, nay fearful. Throg then introduced an old friend. From a door behind him emerged Prince Barinjhar! Together, Barinjhar and Throg had orchestrated Princess Sarissa's kidnapping. The Prince's motive was to destroy the Chalice-Salamonian alliance, while Throg merely wanted to draw the so called 'Heroes of Kallamehr' to his home ground, and dispose of them before they could be a threat to his 'bigger' plans!

Ravell and Barinjhar (who never liked each other in the first place) didn't waste any time, and engaged in a lethal mono-et-mono sword fight in front of the cackling Throg. Marcellos guarded the doorway with the frightened Dappa and watched as Tetra's hurled axe and Elexa's arrows simply bounced off the seated Xortan. E'Lantro stepped forward to test his theory that only magic can defeat magical evilness but before he could act he was Force-bolted by Throg to the back of the room. Throg then repeated the favour to Alexa and Tetra, and they too were plummeted backwards, landing in a heap at the feet of Sir Marcellos. Barinjhar, an excellent swordsman, also seemed to be getting the better of Rav. "They're all going to die!" yelled Dappa. Things looked dire. Marcellos took a deep breath and charged at Bharinjhar and his intervention swung the battle back in the heroes favour. Rav's sword cleaved into the Prince for the telling blow, sending him sprawling to his death. Tetra threw a dagger at an incense burner hanging next to Throg, smashing it, and making the sorcerer stand abruptly, yelling No! The team deduced that the hanging pots seemed to give Xortan his power. E'Lantro cast a Teleport spell to get closer to the second incense burner, but it went wrong, and instead it teleported Alexa right next to Xortan Throg! But this was a blessing in disguise. Alexa thrust her sword into the vile sorcerer – drawing dark oozing blood. Xortan winced in surprise and horror, and with his Force Field down, Tetra launched herself forward and gored the sorcerer with her sword. Both Xortan Throg and Barinjhar lay dead.

Marcellos and Rav found the young and beautiful Princess Sarissa bound and gagged inside Throg's private quarters. Marcellos removed the gag and the heroes were then subjected to a tirade of pretentious and condescending pronouncements from the ungrateful princess. As they tried to block the incessant jibes from Sarissa, and plan their escape, the dormant fireplace burst into flame. Appearing from within was the image of Xortan Throg! His voice boomed out arrogantly that the heroes had merely killed his simulacrum and that he was still very much alive... many leagues away... and would exact his revenge upon every last one of them. With a cackling laugh the head then disappeared. The heroes were unperturbed, and found an exit that led to the front gates of the Tower. After slaying the GIANT LIZARD that guarded the gates, they decided not to return to Chalice. They figured that King Pindar would be none too forgiving that his son, Prince Barinjhar was not only the villain, but a dead villain. Trusting Sarissa's boast that she knew the Darkwood Forest south of the Tower like the back of her hand, the party headed to Salamonis.

Rav, Marcellos, Tetra, Elantro, Alexa and Dappa had succeeded in their quest – and without loss to the party – but with the threat of Xortan Throg's revenge on their minds! **FF**

Fighting Fantasy in France

A Foray into the Frenzy and the Fall of *Défis Fantastiques*

The *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks have been published in a variety of different languages since their inception in 1982. **Julien Meneldur** explores the world of the French translations.

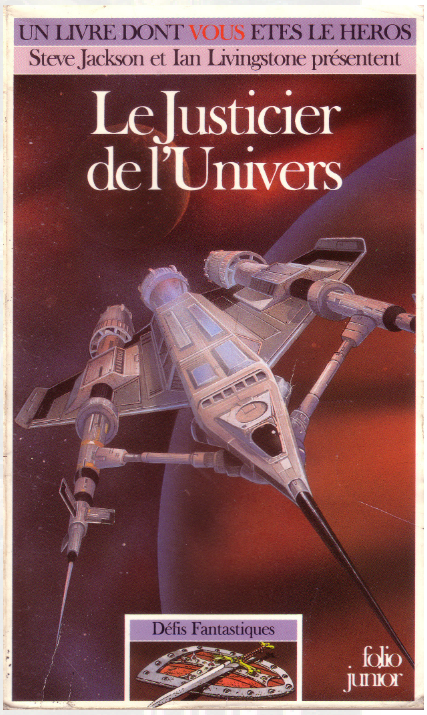
France is famous for its literature, and has always loved to play with writing constraints: emblematic of this is the Oulipo, or "Ouvroir de littérature potentielle" (which may be translated as "potential literature opener"), whose members impose themselves constraints for writing. In 1967, one of them, Raymond Queneau, wrote a text called "Un conte à votre façon" ("A tale in your way"), divided in numbered paragraphs, which may be considered as one of the very first attempts at interactive literature.

It should not be so surprising, then, that the first translation of *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* into a non-English language should have been published in France as early as November 1983, a little over one year after its original release; other languages would have to wait much longer for their translations. This translation was edited by Gallimard, a prestigious publisher established in 1911 among whose authors were Marcel Proust, André Malraux, Saint-Exupéry, André Gide, Eugène Ionesco, and Jacques Prévert. Gallimard remains today one of the chief French publishers, in volume as much as in reputation.

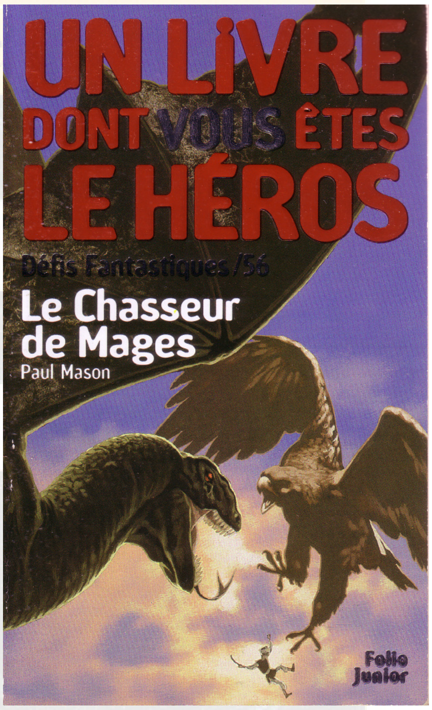
The Warlock of Firetop Mountain was edited in Gallimard's paperback collection, Folio, and more precisely Folio Junior, dedicated to children's books. This collection saw the release of all the French translations of *Fighting Fantasy* books, following a chronology which may be divided into five periods.

The first period (roughly from September 1984 to April 1985) saw the release of the first eleven books. At this point there was not yet any indication of them belonging to a series, but their covers were already based upon a pattern: a thin headpiece on top saying "Un livre dont vous êtes le héros" ("A book in which you are the hero"), followed by the author's name. Sales are tremendous, and stocks run out at high speed.

The second period began in May 1985. The covers were the same as previously, but there was now a little icon at the bottom, depicting a sword on a shield, with the label "Défis Fantastiques" (that is "Fantastic Challenges"; it sounds much better than the literal translation of *Fighting Fantasy*, which may be "Fantasy de Combat" or "Fantasy Combattante"). Following the same pattern, each series of gamebooks published by Gallimard during this period had its own icon: a howling wolf for *Lone Wolf*, two black dices for *Sorcery!*, and so on. This cover style was remarkably long-lived when compared to the English editions: fifty-six books were published in this format until April 1996. Among the translated titles, two had new covers: *Phantoms of Fear* (*Les Spectres de l'Angoisse*) and

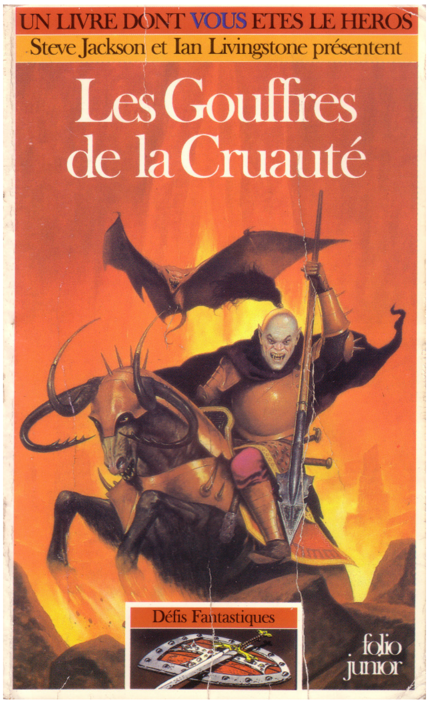

UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ETES LE HEROS
Steve Jackson et Ian Livingstone présentent
Le Justicier de l'Univers
Défis Fantastiques
folio junior

ent of the later English Wizard Books "Series 1" edition: they bore in huge metallic letters the tag line "Un livre dont vous êtes le héros". This break with the former covers, which were considered more refined by fans, was not a well-regarded move and to this day, fans still favour the "first edition" covers to those of this "second edition". Two new titles, *La Revanche du Vampire* (*Revenge of the Vampire*) and *Le Dragon de la Nuit* (*Night Dragon*) were only *Le Justicier de l'Univers* (*Sky Lord*). The last book released in this format (which is colloquially known to French fans as "first edition") was *Le Chasseur de Mages* (*Mage-hunter*).



The Eighties were the peak of the gamebook frenzy everywhere in the world and it was no different in France. In 1986, Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone paid a visit to the Salon du Livre, an annual book event in Paris; according to *Fighting Fantasy* fan Stéphane Béchard, who was there, there were more people around them trying to get autographs than anywhere else in the Salon. Two years later, Gallimard organized a contest on a big poster full of gamebook illustrations, with a quiz and prizes to win.

The third period began in October 1996, and showed signs that the books sales had declined: paper quality was revised downwards with the beautiful white paper of earlier editions making way for a more thin and granular kind of pulp paper. The covers were also "modernized" in style strangely presci-


UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ETES LE HEROS
Steve Jackson et Ian Livingstone présentent
Les Gouffres de la Cruauté
Défis Fantastiques
folio junior

ever published in this “second edition” format, alongside the re-release of older titles. Those published in this new format were probably the most successful ones (twenty-three books never knew the dubious honour of these new covers). Among the reruns, five titles had new covers: *Le Repaire des Morts-Vivants* (*The Keep of the Lich-Lord*), *Les Mondes de l’Aleph* (*Spectral Stalkers*), *La Légende de Zagor* (*Legend of Zagor*), *Le Voleur de Vie* (*Deathmoor*) and *Le Chasseur de Mages*. This series and new titles and reissues lasted till May 2004, but the last book of the original English series, *Curse of the Mummy*, was never translated.

From September 2004 to April 2005, Gallimard reprinted sixteen books from the series, as well as the four *Sorcery!* books. By doing this they followed the Wizard reprints of “Series 1”, but as with their previous use of the metallic font, they demonstrated a surprising foreknowledge of where the series was going when they reprinted *Le Talisman de la Mort* sometime before *Talisman of Death* was reprinted by Wizard in 2006. These new edition covers followed the same pattern as the “second edition” ones, but were now marked with the round “Fighting Fantasy” icon introduced by Wizard (including the *Sorcery!* books). Some illustration covers are taken from the preceding editions, others come from the new Wizard covers. For example, all editions of *Le Manoir de l’Enfer* used the Ian Miller cover, whereas *The Citadel of Chaos* took on the new cover by Kevin Jenkins (maybe this has to do with the quality of said covers?).

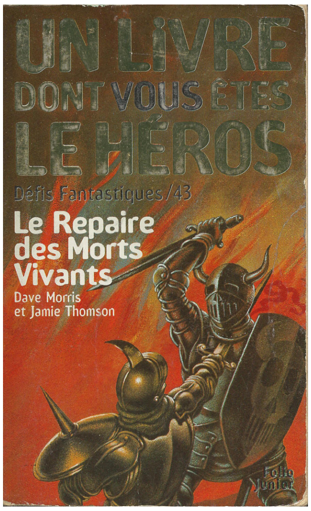
UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
Défis Fantastiques/52
La Légende de Zagor
Ian Livingstone

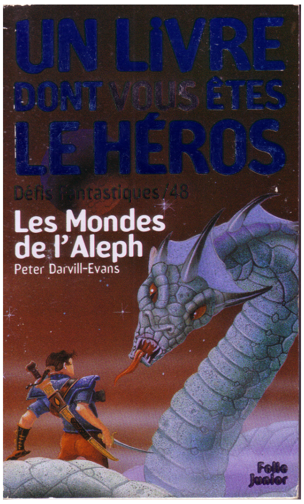
A “third edition” saw the light of the day in January 2007. These books are larger from the former ones, whose size matched the standard one for paperback books in France, again a step ahead of where Wizard would take the English language editions. The covers are considered by fans to be noisier than ever, now bearing now a large golden edge in a manner that reduces the size of the cover art – again ahead of Wizard! Eighteen books were released this way: the sixteen ones from the previous reprint run, plus *La Légende de Zagor* and *L’Œil d’Émeraude* (*Eye of the Dragon*), this second title being the first new translation in almost a decade! Despite the launch of the “Series 2” range last year by Wizard, there have been no more books translated or reprinted.

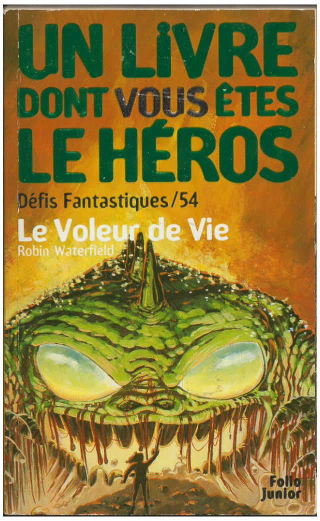
Overall, fifty-nine *Fighting Fantasy* books have been officially translated into French, the exceptions being *Curse of the Mummy*, *Bloodbones*, *Howl of the Werewolf*, *Stormslayer* and *Night of the Necromancer*. Most books have known only one or two editions, the most successful ones (essentially those penned by Jackson or Livingstone) were reprinted in the three “editions”, but the gamebook which has known the largest number of editions is, of course, *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, with no less than eight different editions published in France:

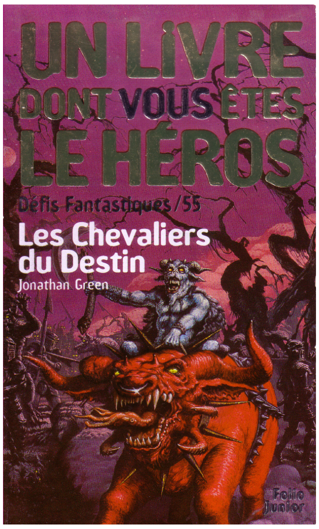
1. The first edition, in November 1983, makes no reference to the *Fighting Fantasy* series and uses a different Dragon illustration by Peter Jones.
2. The second edition, in August 1984, was a promotional offer by Time Life Editions, which was given away with the purchase of another book; otherwise it was a perfect copy of the first one.
3. The third version, in January 1985, launched the “first edition”.
4. The fourth edition, in May of the same year, saw the addition of the series’ logo. It was still being reprinted as late as 1994.
5. The fifth edition, in March 1990, is a special edition which includes a 32-page section with totally new material (a labyrinth, polls, quizzes, crosswords, etc.).
6. The sixth version, in January 1997, marked the start of the “second edition” run.
7. The seventh edition, in October 2004, replaces the traditional logo with the Wizard shield version.
8. The eighth and last one to date, in January 2007, launched the “third edition” range.

Whereas the books have sometimes known several editions, the text inside has always been the same. And what text! The translations range from the good to the horrendous, as well as occasionally stunning, and usually show no consistency between them. This is to be somewhat expected when twenty-six different people worked on the translations of *Fighting Fantasy* – most of them only for one or two books. It is probable that they had no access to the *Fighting Fantasy* RPG and that they didn’t know about the world of Titan and its background (and it may also well be that they didn’t give too much thought about translating “children’s books”), which could explain why names of places or people were often francised or misunderstood: for example, the Dark Continent is variously called Khul, Khûl, Khoul or even Khal; Allansia sometimes becomes Allansie or remains the same; Port Blacksand has been called Sables-Noirs, Port de Sable Noir, Port-des-Sables-Noirs, Sable-Noir, among others. Other changes are more serious: the translator of *L’Ancienne Prophétie* (*Black Vein Prophecy*) has made of Meyor (francisation of Maior) and Feyor (Faior) the nephews of Dezunvial (Bezenvial), instead of his sons, largely overstepping her position of translator. A similar case occurred with *Défis Sanglants sur l’Océan* (*Seas of Blood*), where the translation adds loads of details totally


UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
Défis Fantastiques/43
Le Repaire des Morts Vivants
Dave Morris et Jamie Thomson
Folio Junior


UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
Défis Fantastiques/48
Les Mondes de l'Aleph
Peter Darvill-Evans
Folio Junior


UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
Défis Fantastiques/54
Le Voleur de Vie
Robin Waterfield
Folio Junior


UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
Défis Fantastiques/55
Les Chevaliers du Destin
Jonathan Green
Folio Junior

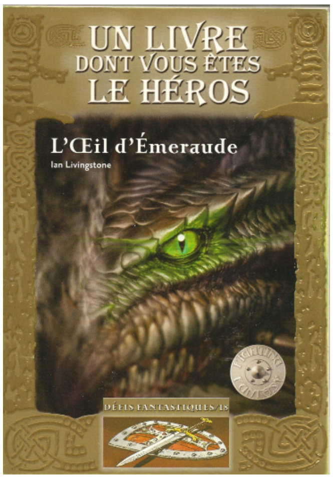
absent from the original text (maybe the translator was a frustrated writer?). For example, look at the original 237:

The Banshee *is grappled as it passes a large war galley. As it is drawn towards the vessel, a vaguely familiar figure appears among the crowd of marines at the gunwhale. 'You there,' he shouts, pointing at you. 'I know you. Didn't we meet at a game of punch-out once?' Straining to place his face, you remember. It is Ali Mitok sen el-Shazar, a wealthy noble of Shurrupak. 'Yes" you say, 'you beat me badly. I lost six teeth!' He laughs at the memory and signals to the marines to cease dragging the* Banshee *in. 'I don't know how you got caught up in this little affair,' he says, waving vaguely at the raging battle a few hundred yards away, 'but for old time's sake, I will let you go for a small ransom – 200 Gold Pieces!' If you are willing and able to pay this, turn to* ***71****. If you don't want to (or can't), turn to* ***96****.*

Now, look at what this paragraph became in the translation (re-translated into English); almost a third long again as the original!

Borne by a light wind, the Banshee *goes straight to the second line of vessels, and it is not long before she comes up to a strong war galley. The hulls almost touch, and you are so tend you almost hear the growling of the rowers on their benches. So you can't help being startled when many grappling hooks fall on your bridge with a loud sound, then scrape it before sticking in the starboard washboard. Before you can order any manoeuvre, the oars of the galley have disappeared and the you are inexorably driven towards the hostile ship by the ropes which bear the hooks. The enemy is ready to board. You think you recognize a vaguely familiar face among the crowd of sailors who press to invade the* Banshee*: a giant whose only eye shines with a pleasure that makes you shudder. He wields a dreadful sword in his left hand. His right hand is directly pointed towards you...*
– There you are, scoundrel! I think you have not forgotten the day we wrestled?
You only know too well this pirate, indeed... You laugh and answer:
– Don't be afraid, Meynos El Shazar, the one who made me lost six teeth with only one punch will never leave my memory!
– Good, good, laughs El Shazar, his only eye full of tears at the joy from this memory. He then orders to his men to stop the fire against the Banshee.
– I wonder how you got caught up into our small deal, he says with a glance in direction of the battle which now rages at one mile away; but in remembrance of the good old days, I'll let you go for... say, 200 Gold Pieces!
If you own this amount – a real treasure – and agree to pay, turn to ***71****. But if you don't have enough money, or if you don't want to pay, turn to* ***96****.*

Another fact shows Gallimard's growing disdain for the books: the interior art. As early as *La Citadelle du Chaos*, a few illustrations were not included into the French version, probably to save a little money. This practice became worse and worse as the series progressed and the sales began to slow down, reaching its climax on *La Revanche du Vampire*, which included only four examples of Martin McKenna's great artwork! Overall, only 17 books have been published with all their interior art, while 446 (!) illustrations have been cut. Almost all the maps met the same fate, adding to the sensation that *Défis Fantastiques* was a series without links between books whatsoever. In contrast, the translations of *Lone Wolf* (*Loup Solitaire*) always included their maps (that is to say, until Gallimard decided to drop all interior art altogether, a fate which no *Défis Fantastiques* book suffered).


UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
L'Œil d'Émeraude
Ian Livingstone
DÉFIS FANTASTIQUES 18

Overall, France was clearly the non-English country where the *Fighting Fantasy* series was the most successful: most languages saw only the release of a handful of translations, but the French *Défis Fantastiques* lack only five titles (or even only one if we consider the Penguin edition). Most gamebook fans would probably list it as their favourite series overall, with only *Lone Wolf* as possible competitor, and few would they be to not list *Le Labyrinthe de la Mort* (*Deathtrap Dungeon*), *Le Talisman de la Mort* or *La Créature venue du Chaos* (*Creature of Havoc*) among their most-beloved titles. However, amateur writers don't show quite the same enthusiasm: Xhoromag, the portal of French amateur adventures, presents only thirteen *Fighting Fantasy*-inspired gamebooks, most of them being translations from English. However, two of these gamebooks deserve mention: the collective projects *Retour au Marais aux Scorpions* (*Return to Scorpion Swamp*), a sequel of the US Steve Jackson's *Scorpion Swamp*, and *Les Portes du Daleth* (*Doors of the Daleth*), a sequel of Peter Darvill-Evans's *Spectral Stalkers*, both of them being more than a thousand paragraphs long and implicating a dozen of writers; two veritable défis fantastiques!

With thanks to Stéphane Bechard.
This article is also available in French on the magazine website. **FF**

Appendix – A List of *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks

UN LIVRE DONT VOUS ÊTES LE HÉROS
Défis Fantastiques/49
Le Siège de Sardath
Keith P. Phillips

En.#	Fr.#	French title	Literal English translation	Translator	First publication
1	1	Le Sorcier de la Montagne de Feu	The Wizard of Fire Mountain	Camille Fabien	11/83
2	2	La Citadelle du Chaos	Citadel of Chaos	Marie Raymond Farré	09/84
3	3	La Forêt de la Malédiction	Forest of Malediction	Camille Fabien	09/84
4	4	La Galaxie Tragique	The Tragic Galaxy	Camille Fabien	09/84
5	5	La Cité des Voleurs	City of Thieves	Janine Hérisson & Henri Robillot	09/84
6	6	Le Labyrinthe de la Mort	Labyrinth of Death	Patricia Marais	09/84
7	7	L'Île du Roi Lézard	Island of the Lizard King	Fabienne Vimereu	09/84
8	8	Le Marais aux Scorpions	Scorpions Swamp	Camille Fabien	02/85
9	9	La Sorcière des Neiges	The Snow Witch	Michel Zénon	02/85
10	10	Le Manoir de l'Enfer	Manor of Hell	Michel Zénon	02/85
11	11	Le Talisman de la Mort	Talisman of Death	Camille Fabien	02/85
12	12	Le Mercenaire de l'Espace	Space Mercenary	Jean Walters	10/85
13	13	Le Combattant de l'Autoroute	Freeway Fighter	Pascale Jusforgues & Alain Vaulont	10/85
14	14	Le Temple de la Terreur	Temple of Terror	Denise May	10/85
15	15	Les Trafiquants de Kelter	Dealers of Kelter	Anne Blanchet	02/86
16	16	Défis Sanglants sur l'Océan	Bloody Challenges Over the Ocean	Jean Walters	08/86
17	17	Rendez-vous avec la M.O.R.T.	Appointment with D.E.A.T.H.	Arnaud Dupin de Beyssat	05/86
18	18	La Planète Rebelle	Rebel Planet	C. Degolf	04/86
19	19	Les Démons des Profondeurs	Demons of the Depths	Noël Chassériau	08/86
20	20	L'Épée du Samouraï	Sword of the Samurai	Pascale Jusforgues	08/87
21	21	L'Épreuve des Champions	Trial of Champions	Pascale Jusforgues & Alain Vaulont	02/87
22	22	La Grande Menace des Robots	The Great Threat of Robots	Danielle Plociennik	08/87
23	23	Les Sceaux de la Destruction	Seals of Destruction	Sylvie Bonnet	11/87
24	24	La Créature venue du Chaos	The Creature from Chaos	Noël Chassériau	01/89
25	25	La Forteresse du Cauchemar	Nightmare Fortress	Mona de Pracontal	08/87
26	26	La Crypte du Sorcier	Crypt of the Wizard	Noël Chassériau	11/87
27	27	Le Chasseur des Étoiles	Star Hunter	Arnaud Dupin de Beyssat	11/87
28	28	Les Spectres de l'Angoisse	Spectres of Anguish	Mona de Pracontal	04/88
29	29	Les Rôdeurs de la Nuit	The Night Stalkers	Nicolas Grenier	10/88
30	30	Les Gouffres de la Cruauté	Pits of Cruelty	Sylvie Bonnet	09/88
31	31	L'Empire des Hommes-Lézards	Empire of the Lizard Men	Jean Lacroix	10/88
32	32	Les Esclaves de l'Éternité	Slaves of Eternity	Sylvie Bonnet	03/89
33	33	Le Justicier de l'Univers	Avenger of the Universe	Mona de Pracontal	03/89
34	34	Le Voleur d'Âmes	Stealer of Souls	Mona de Pracontal	09/89
38	35	Le Vampire du Château Noir	Vampire of Black Castle	Mona de Pracontal	03/90
37	36	La Nuit des Mutants	Night of the Mutants	Anne Collas	05/90
36	37	Les Sombres Cohortes	The Dark Troops	Noël Chassériau	03/90
35	38	L'Élu des Six Clans	Chosen of the Six Clans	Noël Chassériau	06/90
39	39	Le Volcan de Zamarra	Volcano of Zamarra	Olivier Meyer	05/90
41	40	Le Sceptre Noir	The Black Sceptre	Camille Fabien	09/90
40	41	La Vengeance des Démons	Revenge of the Demons	Mona de Pracontal	09/90
42	42	L'Ancienne Prophétie	The Old Prophecy	Mona de Pracontal	06/91
43	43	Le Repaire des Morts Vivants	Den of the Living Dead	Nicolas Grenier	08/91
44	44	La Légende des Guerriers Fantômes	Legend of the Phantom Warriors	Alexis Galmot	09/91
46	45	La Tour de la Destruction	Tower of Destruction	Mona de Pracontal	09/92
48	46	L'Arpenteur de la Lune	Surveyor of the Moon	Pierre de Laubier	11/92
47	47	Les Mercenaires du Levant	Mercenaries of the Rising Sun	Mona de Pracontal	04/93
45	48	Les Mondes de l'Aleph	Worlds of the Aleph	Yannick Surcouf	04/93
49	49	Le Siège de Sardath	Siege of Sardath	Yannick Surcouf	10/93
50	50	Retour à la Montagne de Feu	Return to Fire Mountain	Yannick Surcouf	11/93
51	51	Les Mages de Solani	Magi of Solani	Noël Chassériau	01/94
54	52	La Légende de Zagor	Legend of Zagor	Pascale Houssin	07/94
53	53	Le Sépulcre des Ombres	Sepulchre of Shadows	Noël Chassériau	09/94
55	54	Le Voleur de Vie	Stealer of Life	Mona de Pracontal	01/95
56	55	Les Chevaliers du Destin	Knights of Doom	Pascale Houssin	05/95
57	56	Le Chasseur de Mages	Hunter of Magi	Mona de Pracontal	08/95
58	57	La Revanche du Vampire	Revenge of the Vampire	Yannick Surcouf	02/97
52	58	Le Dragon de la Nuit	Dragon of the Night	Nicolas Grenier	05/97
		L'Œil d'Émeraude	The Emerald Eye	C. Degolf	01/07

1	1	Les Collines Maléfiques	The Evil Hills	Camille Fabien	05/85
2	2	La Cité des Pièges	City of Traps	J. J. Schakmundès & Camille Fabien	05/85
3	3	Les Sept Serpents	The Seven Serpents	Pascale Jusforgues & Alain Vaulont	09/85
4	4	La Couronne des Rois	The Crown of Kings	Camille Fabien	09/85

The Sorcery! Spell Book was never published independently.

1	5	Lothar le Sorcier	Lothar the Sorcerer	Yannick Surcouf	08/90
2	6	Clovis le Chevalier	Clovis the Knight	Yannick Surcouf	09/90

Surprisingly, the *Clash of the Princes* books have never been published as part of the *Défis Fantastiques* range, nor as an independent two-book series. Instead, Gallimard dubbed them volumes 5 and 6 of the series *Double Jeu* (*Double Game*), another two-player gamebooks series written by Simon Farrell and Jon Sutherland. None of other *Fighting Fantasy*-related books (novels, yearbook, etc.) seem to have been officially translated.

AELOUS RAVEN AND THE WRATH OF THE SEA-WITCH

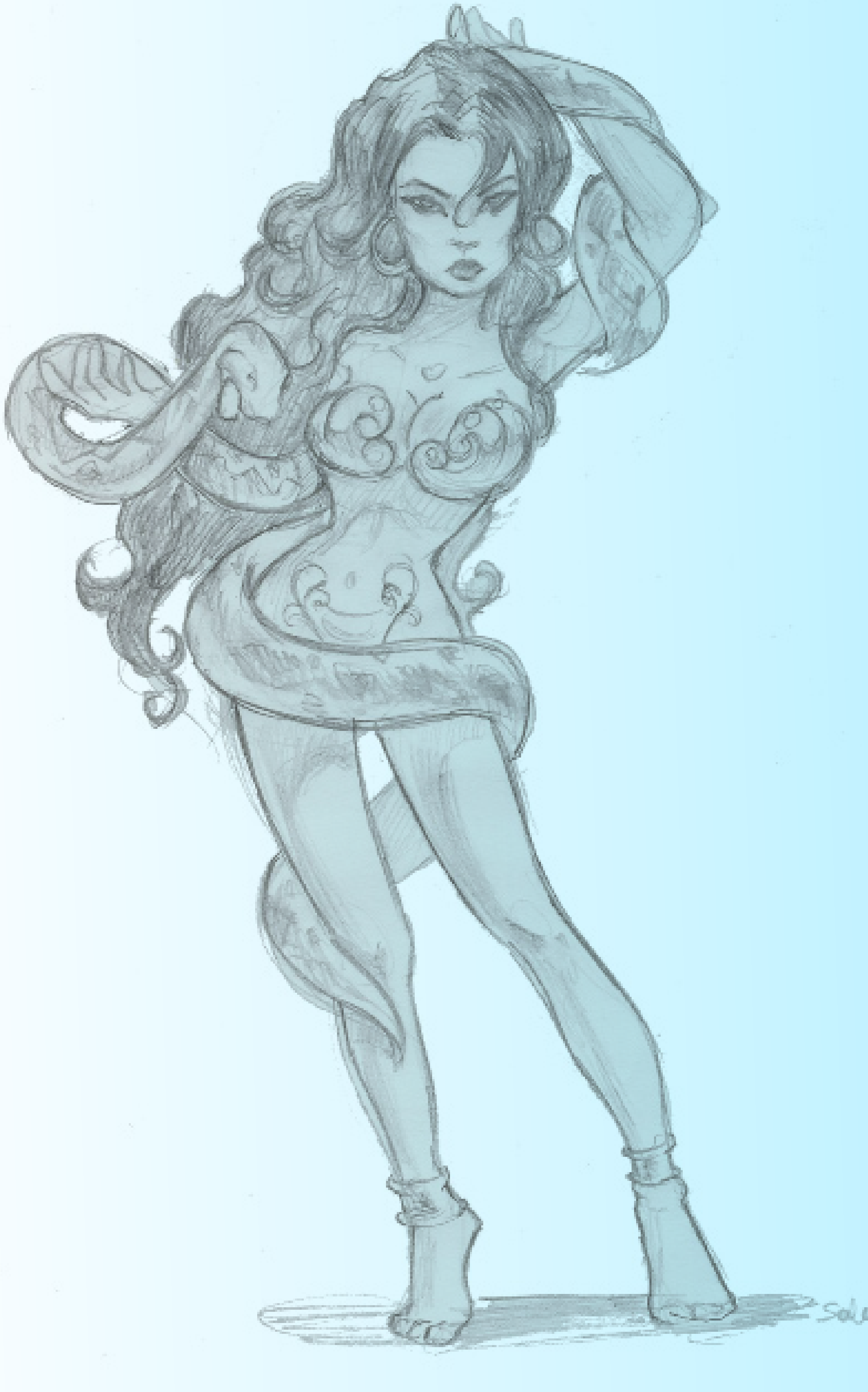
by Ian Brocklehurst
Illustrated by Angela Salamaliki © 2010

PROLOGUE

Aeolus Raven stood at the top of the flight of timber steps and surveyed the Bei-Han Dancing House he had just entered. Below and spread out across the wooden floor was a sea of small tables with patrons all sat so as to face the large dais that filled one side of the building. Most of the clientele were humans from the local area, but there a few Northern Allansians present and at one table sat two men from Arantis; their style of dress suggested they were merchants from Kaynlesh-Ma. The only nonhumans Raven could spot apart from the two Doragar guards who stood at either side of the dais were two tables of dwarves enjoying their smoking weed in the far corner. It was to three Bei-Han locals who were sat towards the middle of the room that he was keen on spotting.

As Raven was about to descend the steps; from off-stage the musicians struck up. A mixture of wood and wind instruments began a well-known dancing-girls piece before the harps joined in. On the dais nine dancing girls appeared from off-stage each wearing a metallic bronze two-piece and in their hands they carried a snake. The Dance of the Nine Vipers had begun.

Raven walked gingerly down the eight steps and tried not to stare at the nearest Doragar guard leaning on its double-headed axe that was probably the only male in the room who didn't have their eyes fixed to the sensuous performance unfolding on the raised dais. Ducking low to avoid blocking the view of any of the goggling patrons, Raven quickly



made his way to the central table and grabbed an empty stool to sit directly opposite the three Bei-Han men.

'Ah,' said the central man, stroking his moustache, 'Aeolus Raven, the master-thief.'

Raven ignored the insult and smiled causally. 'You know my friends call me Birdy, but as we're not friends you could I'm an Acquirer of Rare Antiquities, or even a Tomb Raider?'

'A thief's a thief by whatever title they choose to be.'

Raven maintained the smile. 'Well then, Ku-Han Lee. If you don't like thieves then I guess we don't have any business to discuss.' He stood to leave but Lee motioned for him to sit down.

'You have it, then?'

On the dais the dancing-girls were pirouetting with the snakes raised above their heads.

'You know I have it,' answered Raven, the smile disappeared. 'You're colleague tried to steal it last night in an ambush on the outskirts of the city.' Raven looked at the man seated on Lee's right. 'How's the headache?'

The man said nothing and just glared at Raven with venomous hatred.

'Ke-Ko here just wanted to help you by escorting you safely back to Bei-Han,' Lee explained tapping his henchman on the shoulder. 'You showed great disrespect in knocking him out.'

'Yeah,' snorted Raven. 'Well trying to rob me didn't exactly earn him my respect. He's lucky I'm not one for carrying anything fancy like our Doragar friends here otherwise he might have come off a lot worse.'

Lee nodded. 'Point taken, Master-thief however, you must understand I was concerned you might not have chosen to meet us here today and instead disappear with our...' he paused a moment, thinking of the right word to say, 'acquisition.'

On the dais the dancing-girls were nearing the climax to their routine.

'But then I wouldn't get my money.'

'You could sell it elsewhere.'

'I wouldn't get what you asked for it and besides.' Raven glanced round at the dais to see the dancing-girls finish triumphantly to a rousing applause from the audience. 'The Catacombs of Mek-Har were no Deathtrap Dungeon, but they took quite a bit of effort to get though. You forgot to mention the Tarator as one of the encounters I might come up against.'

Lee shrugged his shoulders slightly. 'Our knowledge of the Catacombs has always been a bit slim. The Cure of Mek-Har has always kept adventurers away, until you.'

'Until me,' Raven smiled again briefly. 'Not one for believing in curses unless there's a wizard or such like involved. Mek-Har was just a man, so I gambled that the "Curse" was just a rumour designed to scare off intruders. Unlike the booby-traps, which were very real and quite deadly.'

'Still, you've made it back in one piece and you have it with you?'

The dancing-girls filed off-stage and conversations were struck-up gain around the tables.

Raven nodded. 'Money first.'

'Show it to me and of course you'll get paid.'

Raven sighed and from the backpack across his shoulders he slowly reached in and pulled out a piece of cloth. Placing it onto the table he opened the cloth.

'Magnificent,' said Lee.

His two henchmen gazed at it in awe.

Raven wrapped it up again. 'Okay, so you know I have it now can I get paid please as I'm really quite tired and could do with a good meal before I sleep for a week.'

Lee nodded and the henchman to his left handed Raven a small pouch.

Raven took the pouch and using one hand opened it allowing him to see the contents. 'Wait a minute,' he muttered angrily. 'These aren't diamonds. They're gems. Sure, there's a few hundred gold coins worth in there, but we'd agreed a fee of diamonds.'

'Diamonds, gems, a precious stone is a precious stone.' Lee extended a hand towards Raven over the jug of wine that dominated the centre of the table. 'Now hand it over and be on your way Master-thief.'

Raven scratched the back of his head as his heart started to pound faster in his chest. 'Only for the diamonds we had shaken on.'

Lee laughed softly at the same time as a single dancing-girl appeared on the dais sans snake and started a solo routine to an upbeat tempo. 'Do not cause a scene, Master-thief. Take your pay leave before things turn nasty.'

At the word "nasty" the henchmen on either side of Lee moved their tunics aside to show the hilts of their sheathed serrated swords.

'I see,' said Raven looking at each henchman and then back to Lee. 'Well then, I guess I'll just have to say... no deal!'

At the same time as Raven tossed the pouch of gems vertically in the air he leapt to his feet and using his right foot pushed the table into the three men opposite knocking them sprawling to the floor. As he caught the pouch and tucked it into his belt he turned on his feet to leave amid the surprised faces of the clientele, several of whom had got to their feet.

'Kill him!' Lee cried from his prone position on the floor and covered in wine from the upturned jug. 'One hundred gold for his head on a stake.'

Immediately several swords were quickly drawn at the same time as the dancing-girl fled the dais screaming.

'Trouble,' said Raven to himself, absentmindedly as a hulking brute squared up to him.

'Going somewhere, worm?' He growled.

'Through you,' replied Raven and rugby-tackled the human giant into the patrons who had gathered behind his great mass. Several bodies went down like a row of dominos and in the mayhem Raven leapt onto the nearest upright table and started to jump across the tables to the stairwell. Along the way he kicked a few jugs of wines at anyone who seemed to be trying to grab him.

He was just about to leap over to the stairwell when the realization that something was about to strike him from out of the corner of his eye forced him to instead leap to the left. The huge axe of the Doragar barely missed slicing him in half.

'Human scum,' barked the half Orc, half Troll warrior of Chaos. 'You die, now!

Raven had landed in a crouched position on his haunches and he saw that the Doragar was going to swing the axe up to bring it down with all its considerable might. Of course Raven would be quicker than that. He had already bounded in one move to the stairwell as the axe dug deep into the spot where he had just been. The Doragar looked slightly confused as it didn't see a bloody mess in front of it.

'Don't let him escape,' bellowed Lee who had gotten to his feet with the help of Ke-Ko.

As Raven reached the top of the steps he realized he still held the cloth in his hands. He looked back at the pandemonium he had caused in the Dancing-House and called down to the Doragar.

'Here, Greenskin.'

The Doragar looked up at him pushing aside its hair that had covered its face.

'Catch.' Raven threw the cloth down.

'No,' screamed Lee. 'Be careful with that...'

The Doragar caught the cloth a little too heavily and it felt something break inside. Then the cloth burst into flames, which surprised the Doragar who threw the burning rag to the floor and started to stamp on it.

Raven didn't stay to see what happened next he was quickly out the door and attempted to get lost in the meandering columns of people who were walking through the streets in the entertainment-district of Bei-Han. Realizing he was in a lot of trouble and with a couple of glances over his shoulders he made his way down towards the port.

***

It had taken long for a troop of armed men in Lee's service to catch up with Raven. Within ten minutes of fleeing the Dancing-House he was being rapidly pursued down the narrow streets of the city. As he entered the crowded market-district, Raven ducked down low and weaved around the many shoppers who were present. He hoped to get lost in the flow of consumers, but the problem was his actions were obviously suspicious and he was making himself stand out.

'Scoundrel!' shrilled a woman who ran a fruit and vegetable stall.

'What's your game?' A cloth merchant extorted as Raven sneaked behind his stall.

'Someone call the Watch,' cried another voice.

'We're here,' answered a stentorian voice a few feet away. 'We're in pursuit of a dangerous thief. Thirty gold pieces to whoever gives him up.'

Suddenly there were multiple shouts and fingers pointing at Raven. A scrawny woman catapulted herself onto his back, but by reversing his body against the wall he was able to dislodge her. Fighting off a few more grasping hands, he finally broke away from the crowds and could see the masts of ships above the buildings ahead.

'Almost there,' he muttered to himself just as a crossbow bolt whizzed past his right ear and embedded itself into a pillar directly ahead of him. Ducking low to avoid any more bolts he had to catch the pouch of gems, which slipped from between his belt and trousers, in the same movement. As he hurried along he shoved the pouch into his backpack.

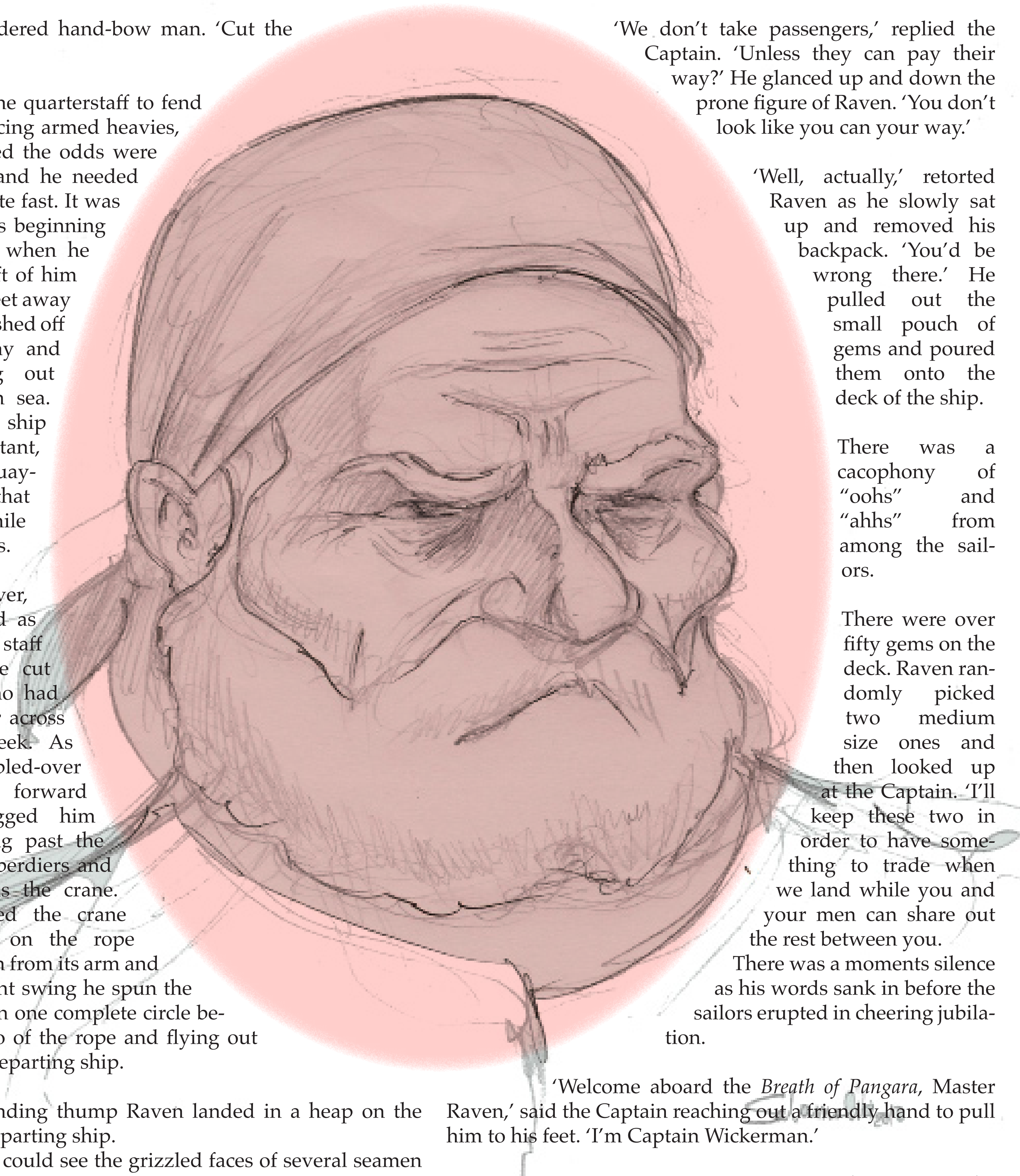
Racing onto the quayside Raven came to a sudden halt, partly to catch his breath and partly to try and spot where he could go next. The momentary rest was a bad idea as the armed pursuers arrived and fanned out towards him. Twelve men of Bei-Han armed with halberds and decked in heavy leathers for armour protection. One of the men had a hand-bow tucked into a holster around his belt; no doubt the source of the bolt that had almost hit him moments before.

'Give it up, thief,' demanded hand-bow man. 'There's nowhere to run to now.'

Around the quayside merchants and sailors alike stopped what they were doing and started to watch the proceeding events with unremitting curiosity.

'Lie on the ground or prepare to die!'
At the order the men started to advance on Raven. He was close to the water's edge and surrounded by barrels and crates of unknown goods that were waiting for their cargo ship to dock. Spotting a loose quarterstaff lying across some barrels, Raven picked it up and spinning it above his head he brought it down to parry the first two halberds that slashed at him. Bringing an end of the staff down onto the foot of one

of the men, Raven brought it back up quick enough to smack the other man square on the forehead. As the first man started hopping around manically, grabbing his crushed toes; the second armed thug dropped to the cobbled stoned ground backwards like a felled tree.



'Kill him!' ordered hand-bow man. 'Cut the dog down!'

Raven used the quarterstaff to fend off the advancing armed heavies, but he realized the odds were against him and he needed an escape route fast. It was just as he was beginning to lose hope when he saw to the left of him about thirty feet away a ship had pushed off from the quay and was heading out towards open sea. Although the ship was important, it was the quayside crane that brought a smile to Raven's lips.

'Game's over, boys,' he said as he trust the staff deep into the cut of a man who had a wicked scar across his right cheek. As the man doubled-over Raven ran forward and leapfrogged him before rushing past the surprised halberdiers and raced towards the crane. Raven reached the crane and jumped on the rope hanging down from its arm and with one might swing he spun the crane round in one complete circle before letting go of the rope and flying out towards the departing ship.

With a resounding thump Raven landed in a heap on the deck of the departing ship.

Gazing up he could see the grizzled faces of several seamen surrounding him.

'We don't want no trouble,' said one.

'Best throw him overboard,' said another.

'Who are you?' asked the oldest looking face.

'Aeolus Raven.'

'What are you doing on my ship?'

'Well, Captain. I'd quite like to travel to wherever you're going with you and your fellow men.'

'Landlubber wants a holiday,' muttered one of the sailors.

'We don't take passengers,' replied the Captain. 'Unless they can pay their way?' He glanced up and down the prone figure of Raven. 'You don't look like you can your way.'

'Well, actually,' retorted Raven as he slowly sat up and removed his backpack. 'You'd be wrong there.' He pulled out the small pouch of gems and poured them onto the deck of the ship.

There was a cacophony of "oohs" and "ahhs" from among the sailors.

There were over fifty gems on the deck. Raven randomly picked two medium size ones and then looked up at the Captain. 'I'll keep these two in order to have something to trade when we land while you and your men can share out the rest between you.

There was a moments silence as his words sank in before the sailors erupted in cheering jubilation.

'Welcome aboard the *Breath of Pangara*, Master Raven,' said the Captain reaching out a friendly hand to pull him to his feet. 'I'm Captain Wickerman.'

'Pleased to meet you,' answered Raven as he accepted the hand-up to his feet. 'So, where are we headed, Captain?'

'Agra, with a shipment of local spices.'

'Not been to Agra for years,' replied Raven as he looked back at the receding quayside where the armed men had gathered to watch the ship sail away. 'It'll be nice to see the old place again.'

TO BE CONTINUED **FF**

Everything I Really Need to Know I Learnt from Reading *Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks

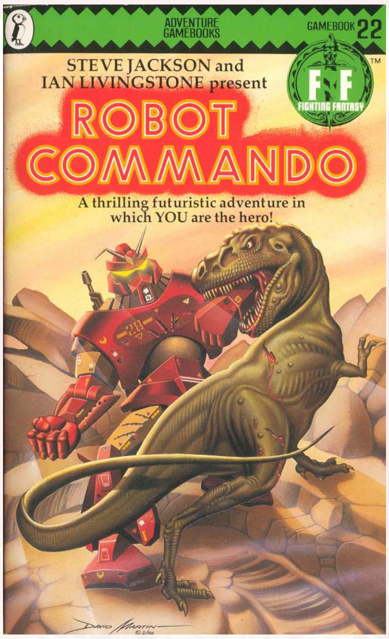
Part 3

Whether you're at the workplace, hoping to meet up with old friends, or going on holiday, you're sure to find some relevant advice buried in a *Fighting Fantasy* gamebook. **Ed Jolley** continues to extract nuggets of wisdom from the *Fighting Fantasy* info-mine.

Trial of Champions

Lord Carnuss wants to humiliate his older brother by proving that the new, improved Deathtrap Dungeon isn't quite as unbeatable as the hype would have it. He could hire a promising young adventurer, train him to the peak of his abilities and equip him with a wide range of useful items, but instead he buys up a batch of slaves, abuses and mistreats them, forces them to kill each other until only one remains, and sends the survivor into the dungeon with less than the bare minimum of equipment. Somehow it never occurs to him that the slave might resent any of this and turn on him at the earliest opportunity. It's not hard to figure out which brother got the brains, is it?

Moral: Treat your employees well, or you may live to regret it.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Masks of Mayhem

Morgana and 'The Traitor' have almost brought their fiendish scheme to fruition. Now all they need is to capture the ruler of Arion and obtain the royal sigil. 'The Traitor' tricks the hapless monarch into going on a quest to thwart the plan, thus ensuring that the last vital component of the magic they're preparing will come merrily trotting through the door at any moment. That is, provided the gullible fool doesn't get eaten or poisoned or drowned or burned or crushed or dissolved or fall victim to any of the other dozens of potentially lethal encounters that litter the route between Arion and Chez Morgana.

Moral: If you're hoping to see someone, consider paying them a visit rather than sitting at home on the off-chance that they'll call round.

Creature of Havoc

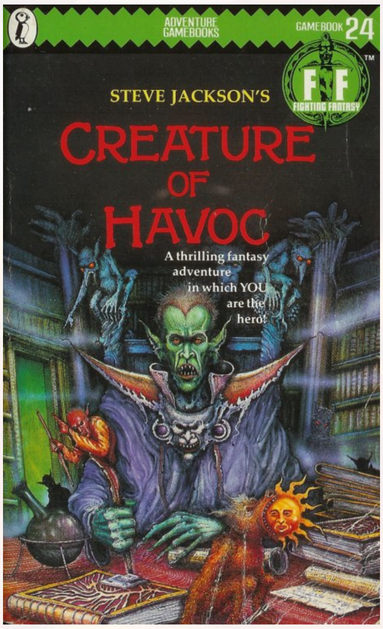
Jfit hf ecrf btvrfep fohb vpco (whj chim vstuhb vfesp mfepr fttyev nplfbs bntah bbj tsit p ojvd gfeb yot hfew byas pomb nyapfp plfer fff retpoj tibsa 'fpvluc rfbt vrfe') lfb rnsa tpov ndfrs tbn dat hfes pff chepf opthf rse, jtih bsat hfec hbncf etpob ferf stprf det pojtsi prjg jnbla fprmob ndaj dfnt jty. Jfij tidpf senpto, jtij sifjth fred ppmfdep rocp ndfmnfdet pobal jffep fos lbvfry. Bfb rat hjsij nim jndith fenfx tetjmf eyp vucbn't abfeb pthfr fdet pop jckiv pub aff we shp rtop hrbs fsej nith felpc blalj ngpop rjp rot pogpj ngib brpbd.

Moral: It's never too late to start learning a new language.

Robot Commando

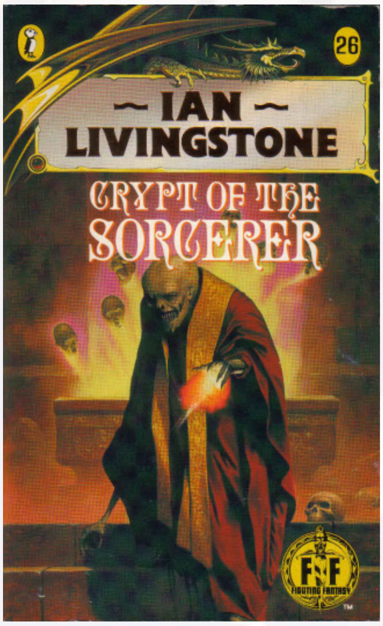
The Karosseans' scheme to conquer Thalos by inflicting sleeping sickness on the Thalians appears to be going perfectly, but then some twit of a soldier fiddles with the button that activates the robot T-Rex in the Thalian Museum, and it kills him and his friends. That would just be a minor incident, but for the fact that one of the bodies is barely mutilated and happens to be exactly the same size as the one Thalian who's immune to the disease. Using the undamaged uniform as a disguise, said Thalian is able to avoid detection just long enough to single-handedly thwart the entire invasion. The soldier responsible would be peeling spuds (or the Karossean equivalent) for a long time if he weren't too dead for kitchen duty.

Moral: If there's a sign that says 'Do not touch', it's probably there for a good reason.



Beneath Nightmare Castle

You decide to pay an unexpected visit on your old friend Tholdur, and discover that there's a new woman in his life. You are, understandably, somewhat put out by this – after all, the place is full of her friends, and she's gone all out to leave her mark on it (using loathsome abominations and crimes against nature rather than the more traditional cushions and nick-nacks), besides which, she's imposed a rather harsh dress code on her new stepdaughter. Even so, you could have just refused to buy them a wedding present, rather than carving her up like you do.

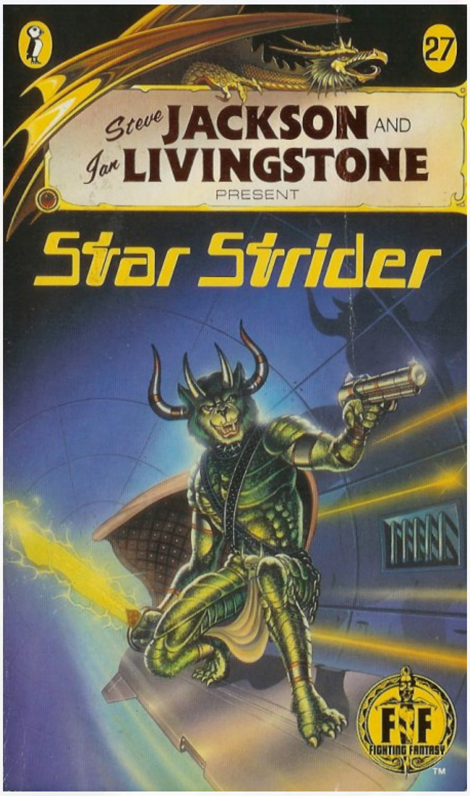


Moral: People change. Sometimes you just have to learn to live with it.

Crypt of the Sorcerer

Ungoth the Skeleton Lord guards the way to Razaak, turning to stone anybody who fails to prove their credentials by answering a selection of trivia questions. What Ungoth doesn't realise is that, mixed in with various petrified adventurers who had intended harm to his Necromantic boss, there are two door-to-door salesmen, a pizza delivery boy who got the wrong address, several postmen (each with a now unreadable issue of 'Necromancy Today'), and the late President of the Razaak Fan Club, who would have made it through but for that puzzler about annual Guursh consumption figures in Zagoula.

Moral: Topics that fascinate you may not be so compelling to others. Don't be too quick to dismiss somebody just because they don't share your interests.



Star Strider

One of the best sources of information on the whereabouts of the kidnapped President is a high-ranking Gromulan based in Paris, whose home you infiltrate by being mistaken for a repairman. All right, so the Grom's under a lot of pressure – the unlikely malfunction that has rendered both the Illus-o-Scope and all the Androids inoperative is forcing him to do tricky tasks like pressing the buttons on the remote control by himself rather than getting a machine to do it – but still, you'd think he could at least tell the difference between a Catchman and a toolbox.

Moral: Don't forget to ask for ID before letting strangers into your house, even if they do have clipboards and overalls.

Phantoms of Fear

Eric Rune-axe gave up adventuring after a bad experience in the Maze of Zagor (which probably happened to a few people who bought *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, too) and moved to another continent to get away from his old life, but still ended up wielding his axe in the fight against evil one more time. Similarly, I gave up on *Fighting Fantasy* in the early 1990s, and got rid of most of my collection, but now I have a complete set of the gamebooks, plus most of the ancillary material, and am a member of several *Fighting Fantasy*-related online groups, and a regular contributor to a fanzine about the series. Mind you, my return to the old ways hasn't got me killed (yet), so I'm not like him in every respect.

Moral: Never underestimate nostalgia's ability to get you back doing something you thought you'd left way, way behind you.

Midnight Rogue

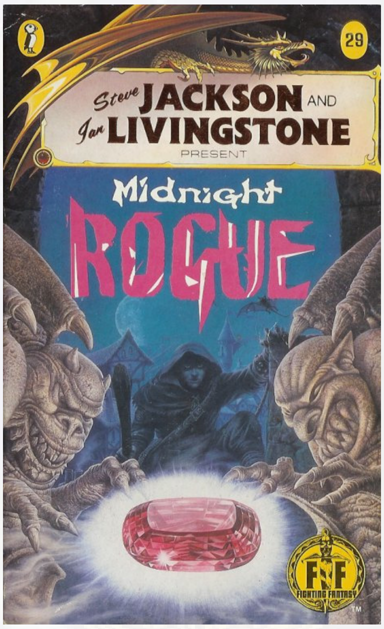
The driving test includes checks on your having mastered some skills that you're unlikely to need on a regular basis, just to be sure that you can do what's required if it does become necessary. A similar approach has been adopted by the Thieves' Guild in Port Blacksand. As well as ensuring that all members have mastered such essentials as picking locks, avoiding detection and grabbing anything valuable that hasn't been nailed down, their Test of Apprentices also requires would-be thieves to have at least a basic grasp of many less obvious techniques, such as consulting a fortune-teller, fighting the undead, navigating through mazes and evading poisonous fungi. But not, strangely enough, checking that you're breaking into the right house in the first place.

Moral: It's good to be prepared, but try to be realistic when thinking about what you might need to be ready for.

Chasms of Malice

The third Stone Wraith is a big disappointment. Though said to always tell 'a truth followed by a lie, followed by a truth,' it doesn't actually speak at all. This may be because it's not sure exactly how that works. Should it just go, 'True sentence, false sentence, true sentence,' or can it expand on each point as required so long as it's clear when the true bit ends and the lie begins? And does the 'truth-lie-truth' thing reset every time a new adventurer comes along, or does the fact that the Wraith finished on a truth the last time some mug tried to get into Minosaddurr mean that its next statement has to be a lie? Saying nothing does at least eliminate the risk of saying the wrong thing and having a disgruntled blood heir report you to the higher powers.

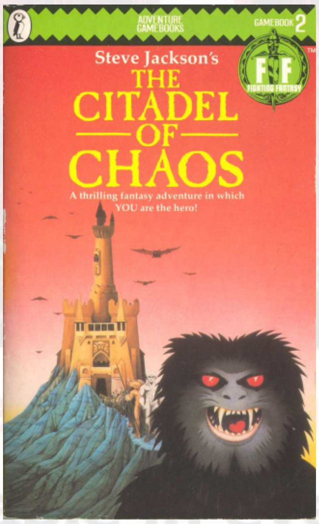
Moral: If there's anything in a job description that you don't fully understand, ask about it before applying for the post. It'll be less embarrassing than getting picked and then having to admit that you can't do the work. FF

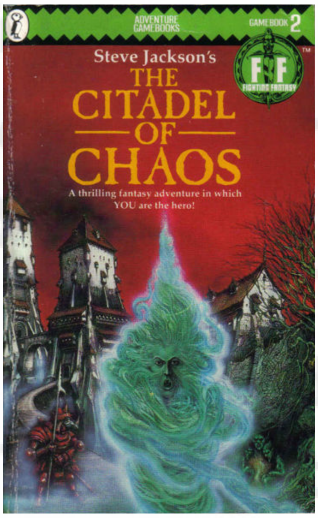


www.fightingfantasycollector.co.uk

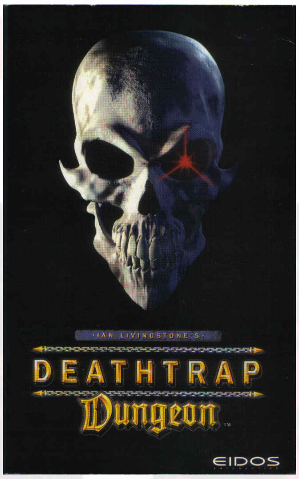
Collector **Jamie Fry** takes a rummage around his collection and points out a few interesting tidbits of information about the range.

Hopefully by now everyone has a copy of the new title *Night of the Necromancer* by Jonathan Green and are attempting to win it. Ever since "Series 2" was launched and this book was announced, the official site and therefore mine had always advertised it as number 7 with *Bloodbones* at 8. To my surprise on receipt of my copy did I discover it to be the other way round. Even the official site still listed it as such. It is worthwhile ordering a few titles together on Amazon to justify the free postage in order to get the new titles at £3.59 each instead of the RRP of £5.99. Oh how times have changed, I didn't even get that for my weekly paper round, instead I paid £1.75 for a book with just enough left over for sweets.



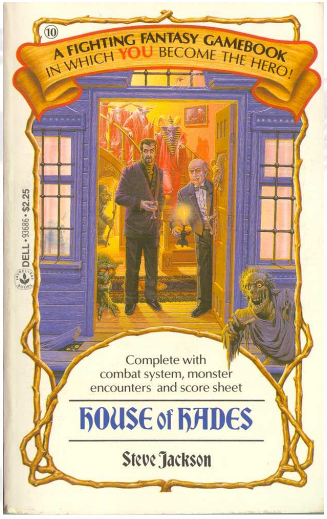


Have you got both versions of *The Citadel of Chaos* with the green zigzag banner? This is the only time artwork was recommissioned in the original series of covers in addition to *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*, however it is neither rare or more valuable in my opinion. I have to agree that the original artwork by Emmanuel was not of the quality of the first book (that's my polite version) and subsequent books that followed, I cannot imagine it was replaced because of how scary it was. According to the Kai Wisdom and Fighting Fantasy Mailing List (circa 1999) it wasn't popular, Richard Stanton described the hideous black creature to the fore as "a ravenous Care Bear" and Nathan Mahney a "Grizzly Ewok". The second cover of the girl (or is it a man?) in a twister is far better by Ian Miller. I have to say though that the female in the picture for reference 245 in the book is much more appealing by Russ Nicholson than the one depicted on the cover. I am fortunate enough to own an original preliminary ink sketch for the cover by Ian (one of several I know to still exist). I paid $29.99 (roughly £20 today) for it about 5 or so years ago and predict it will rise in value.



Another book was given a new cover in the original series (this version was published 3 years after the original series had ended), not because of the aforementioned reason, but as a special edition with the PC software of the same name and this is where the similarity ends as little of the book is reflected in the game. The cover for *Deathtrap Dungeon* is black with a skull on the front in this edition. The 1998 special edition by Eidos (owned by Ian Livingstone) came in a box along with a card game depicting the in game characters. You were unable to buy these separately but you will find them on ebay from time to time. I doubt that the book on its own is rare enough to command £35 as one ebayer expected (but didn't get). I would value the boxed PC game between £10 and £15, the book, the cards and the game individually I would say between £3-5 each. However, every time I attempt to value something, someone is always willing to pay more (and usually has). At this point I had best mention this game was also published in the Playstation One format and a walkthrough and map guide were also published to accompany it.

Ever noticed something different on the spines of *Chasms of Malice* (FF30) and *Spectral Stalkers* (FF45)? Well, the former has no puffin at the bottom at all (apparently neither does the original edition of *Temple of Terror*, but I do not have this version to prove otherwise) and on the latter, the puffin faces left instead of right as in the all the others. Does this make these particular books more valuable to the collector? Not really, but quirky all the same, you just have to wonder why. Two other pieces of trivia for you (and I make no apology for those already in the know as I believe not all readers know all the facts). The first *Fighting Fantasy* book to be written by an author other than the two series co-creators was *Scorpion Swamp* (FF8) and whom interestingly also goes by the name Steve Jackson which causes some confusion amongst the uninitiated, easily done. This Steve is responsible for role-playing games such as *Car Wars* and *Gurps*. The other useless fact is that the American edition of *House of Hell* (FF10) was re-named to *House of Hades* as the US deem the word 'hell' to be blasphemous.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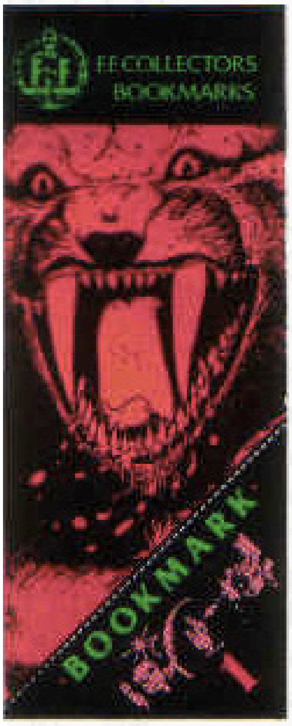
HOUSE of HADES
Steve Jackson

Let's delve into something else other than the books for a change, bookmarks. The first (1982) was to coincide with the launch of the first ever book, *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain*. The bookmark was white, roughly some 7.5" tall and 2.5" wide (5" when open), not only was it double-sided but folded out to view a competition in the middle. It was issued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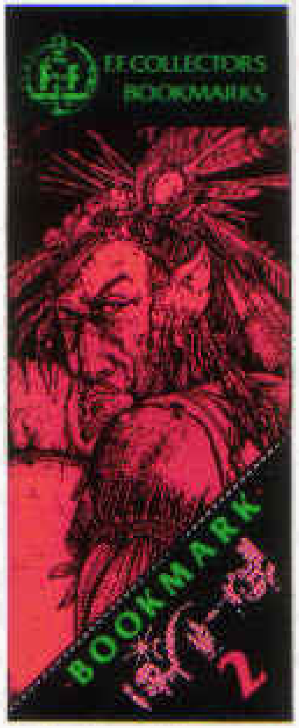
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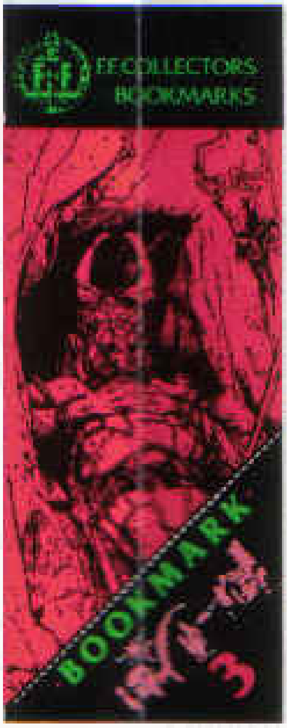
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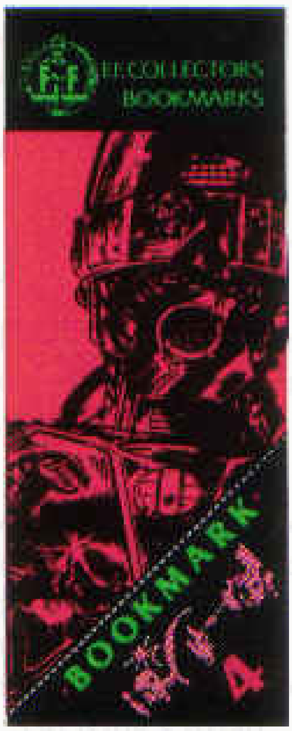
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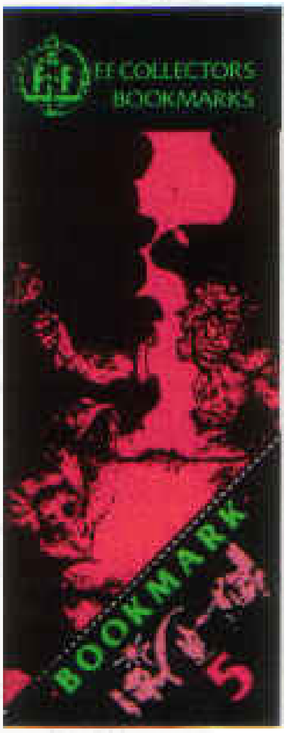
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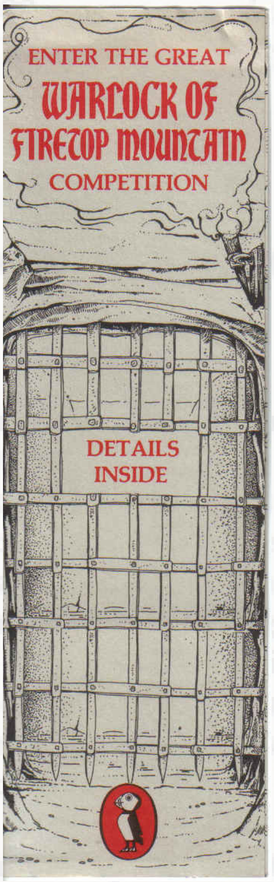
with the book at the time and the prize was the 'Imperial Dragon' by Citadel Miniatures which was a colossal 2ft long and proved a problem for moulders and makers alike. All you had to do was map the book to win. Does anyone know who won this competition?

The next was a series of 5 plus a flyer (1986), all fold-out. The flyer was larger at just over 8" tall and 3" wide, the others were smaller at 6" by just under 2.5". They were released with *The Riddling Reaver*, *Titan – The Fighting Fantasy World*, *Masks of Mayhem* (FF23), *Creature of Havoc* (FF24) and *Helmquest* (not FF). You had to solve a puzzle, cut of the corners and send them in with your answer to win a day with Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone, amongst other goodies for runners up. Provided you have intact bookmarks they can exchange hands for over £5 each, the same would apply to the *The Warlock of Firetop Mountain* version above.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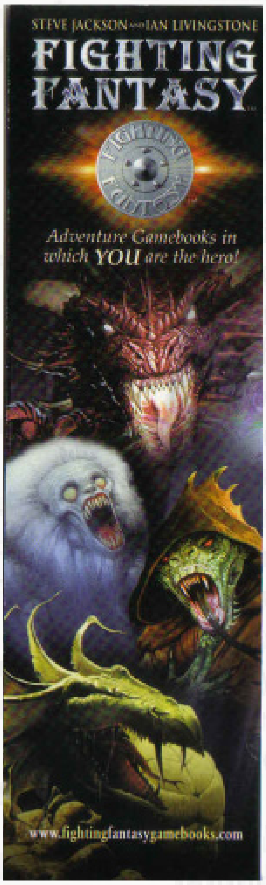
WARLOCK OF FIRETOP MOUNTAIN
COMPETITION
DETAILS INSIDE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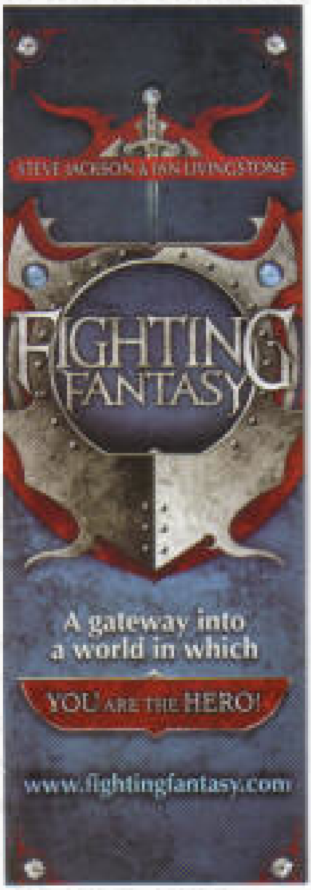
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www.fightingfantasy.com

The last two to mention are more recent additions to mark the launch of the Wizard editions in 2004 and 2009. At just over 6 inches and only double-sided, neither offered a competition but the first, snapshots of characters from the new covers (and book listing to the rear) and the second the new shield and logo design. As these are relatively new and available they would command no more than a pound or so each. These were as far as I can remember only given away at events or if you were lucky in a bookshop. I am sure Wizard books have a few spare of the latest version kicking about if you contact them. Otherwise, happy hunting.

Finally, I must tell you about the collector's guide I have spent hours researching and producing, the *Fighting Fantasy Collector Checklist and Price Guide*. At 30 pages long this guide provides the reader with valuable information regarding all known (to me) *Fighting Fantasy* books, collectables and related merchandise. It covers everything from 1982 through to the present day. Valuations have been carefully researched and the guide prices are based on actual prices I have paid or willing to pay, derived from monitoring various on-line auctions and many other sources. They are based on the book or collectable being in very good condition and complete. Pick up a copy now from my website. FF

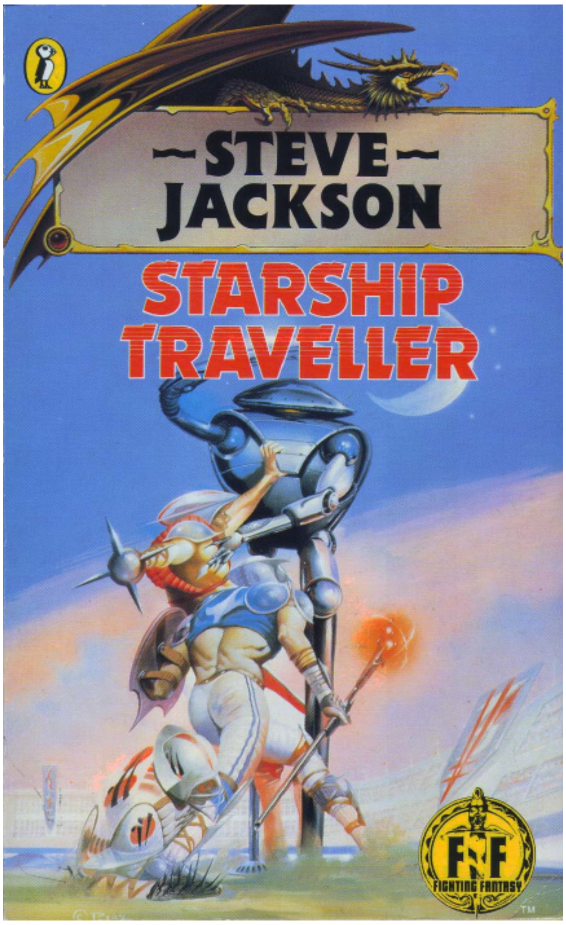
FIGHTING DANTASY

Dan revisits the Fighting Fantasy series, one gamebook at a time...

Remember reading your first *Fighting Fantasy* adventure? The desperate search for the items you need to win, the frantic dice rolls as you fight to stay in one piece mere paragraphs from your goal? **Dan Satherley** has decided to recreate those tense moments from our childhoods by working his way through the series book by book and recording his efforts as he goes.

Boldly going where no previous *Fighting Fantasy* book had gone before, Steve Jackson wasted no time in blurring the line between fantasy and science fiction in setting the fourth installment not only in outer space, but another universe altogether.

You're the hapless captain of a starship named *Traveller* (if you want to be super-nerdy, you can pretend it's *Voyager*, though the book came a decade before) whose Scotty analogue has messed up and allowed the warp drives to malfunction. *Traveller* is speeding ever faster towards a black hole, and your Spock equivalent suggests using its gravitational pull to slow the ship down.



So far, so *Star Trekkin'*. ("Boldly going forward 'cause we can't find reverse... Still can't find reverse... Totally going forward and things are getting worse...")

Anyway, the otherwise logical plan didn't work (else there'd be no book) and you now have to get back to Earth – the problem being, you're in a different universe altogether.

I began with a pretty averagely-skilled crew, not bad, but the dice weren't overly generous. Something different about this particular book is the fact you have a crew to look after – it's not just you and your TARDIS-like rucksack (and 10 proportionally-similar provisions, of course). Something else is that unlike in *Star Trek*, unless otherwise noted, all aliens have phasers set to kill (we'll never know if stormtroopers have the same policy, seeing as they never hit anything).

Another departure I found was that unlike previous books, rolling within your SKILL/LUCK often had a bad outcome, as opposed to the expected positive. My very own Dr. McCoy saved an entire medieval planet from a deadly fever, rolled dice to prove his LUCK, and died. Another time I successfully rolled within my SKILL level to convince some prison guards I wasn't a proverbial Christian to be thrown to the lions for their entertainment – they didn't believe me and made me fight the "Manslayer Robot" anyway.

What kind of messed-up alien society would build a robot specifically designed to kill a species from a different universe? It's as if they knew a species calling itself "man" would arrive and, through a grave misunderstanding, be thrown to the mechanical lions.

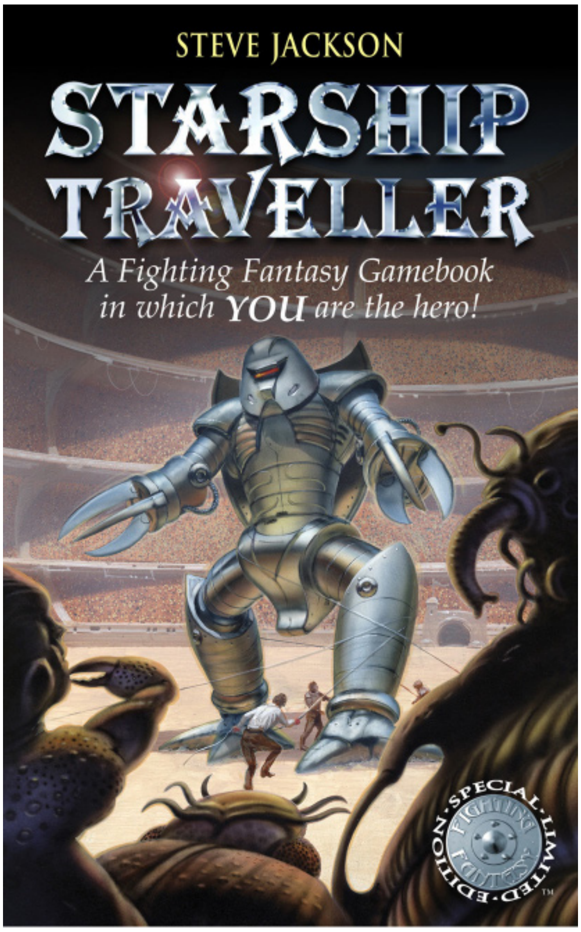
Anwyay... soon after beginning my journey, I found myself at a blue planet, descended and found myself "in a wide street of some kind, which is completely deserted. Buildings, of sorts, line the street and behind you a large building stands at the end of the road. The buildings are strange structures. They are a multitude of shapes and sizes and all look incomplete."

In other words, I was on the main street of Tirau. (Cue a ba-da-bing drum roll of sorts for the Kiwis reading this...)

Okay, the planet I was on, I can't recall its name but it was a libertarian paradise (of which Tirau most certainly is not, and besides, "libertarian paradise"? There's an oxymoron to dwell on...) with a history akin to that of an early, albeit interplanetary United States. Races from all different worlds had fled there to escape problems at home, and decided on their new planet there would be no laws, no rules and no hierarchy. They had "guards" though, which intrigued... turns out, as anyone is allowed to rob/beat/kill anyone they like, what with no rules and all, those planning to rob/beat/kill you are at least courteous enough to dress up as guards – to warn passers-by to be "on guard".

I later came across a planet stuck in the middle ages, whose weather was controlled by an Oz-esque man-behind-the-curtain – in this case, a man-behind-the-computer.

Eventually my crew got tired of re-enacting *Doctor Who* and *Star Trek* episodes, and decided to force the issue of getting home. I'd collected a bunch of possible locations-of, stardates-to-arrive-at and speeds-at-which-to-approach some black holes, and tried out one – we all died, but the text made clear we



would never have known it, which was such a relief.

I never managed to finish this book as a youngster. It's fiendishly difficult – at one point I found myself in a *Warlock*-esque maze whose structure seemed random and the only guide I had was always turning to pages whose numbers I didn't immediately recognise or that I hadn't read yet. The kicker was that when checking, out of morbid, un-sportsmanlike interest where a couple of the pages I hadn't chosen (honest!) led, they were to death. Random death. This, in a sequence which if you survive, provides you with (possibly) one of the details you need to get home. Grrr.

The Wikipedia article on *Starship Traveller* claims the book can be completed without ever having to roll any dice. I find this hard to believe – then again, I never got into any ship-to-ship combat, of which I was led to believe there would be plenty. I obviously went the wrong way – at one point, being down to a single STAMINA point.

The back cover of the book asks, "Will you be able to discover the way back to Earth from the alien peoples and planets you encounter, or will the starship be doomed to roam uncharted space forever?" It's a rhetorical question in the end, as once your crew get suitably annoyed at a lack of inter-dimensional-homeward-bound travel they force the *Traveller* into the nearest black hole regardless of your research. You will not be floating in space for longer than an hour, in your time, to be honest.

Just long enough to watch a competent crew and commander show you how it's done on *Trek*, huh... **FF**

Adapted from Fightingdantasy.blogspot.com

turn to paragraph 1.

COMING IN ISSUE #4
JULY 2010

IN SEARCH OF THE MUNGIES' GOLD

by **Warren McGuire**

Mauristatia, wild land of cloud-capped mountains, shadowy valleys, arcane cults, and fell beasts. Great treasures are said to lie hidden in its depths, but few have been foolhardy enough to risk body and soul in pursuit of them. Dare YOU enter Mauristatia in search of the fabled Mungies' Gold? And will you return to tell the tale?

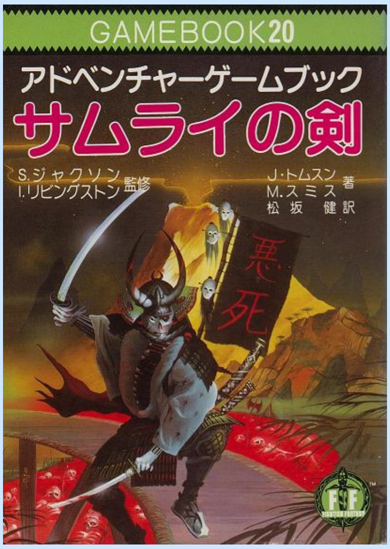
Survey Results

We have the results of the survey and count down the seventy gamebooks of the *Fighting Fantasy* range to reveal which one was YOUR (collective) favourite! Find out how all the books feared, which monsters and villains are most loved, and which individual is thought to have had the most influential impact of the series...

the fact of fiction:
サムライの剣

アレクスは、武家時代の日本に似たところへ、観光で訪れます。

and much more!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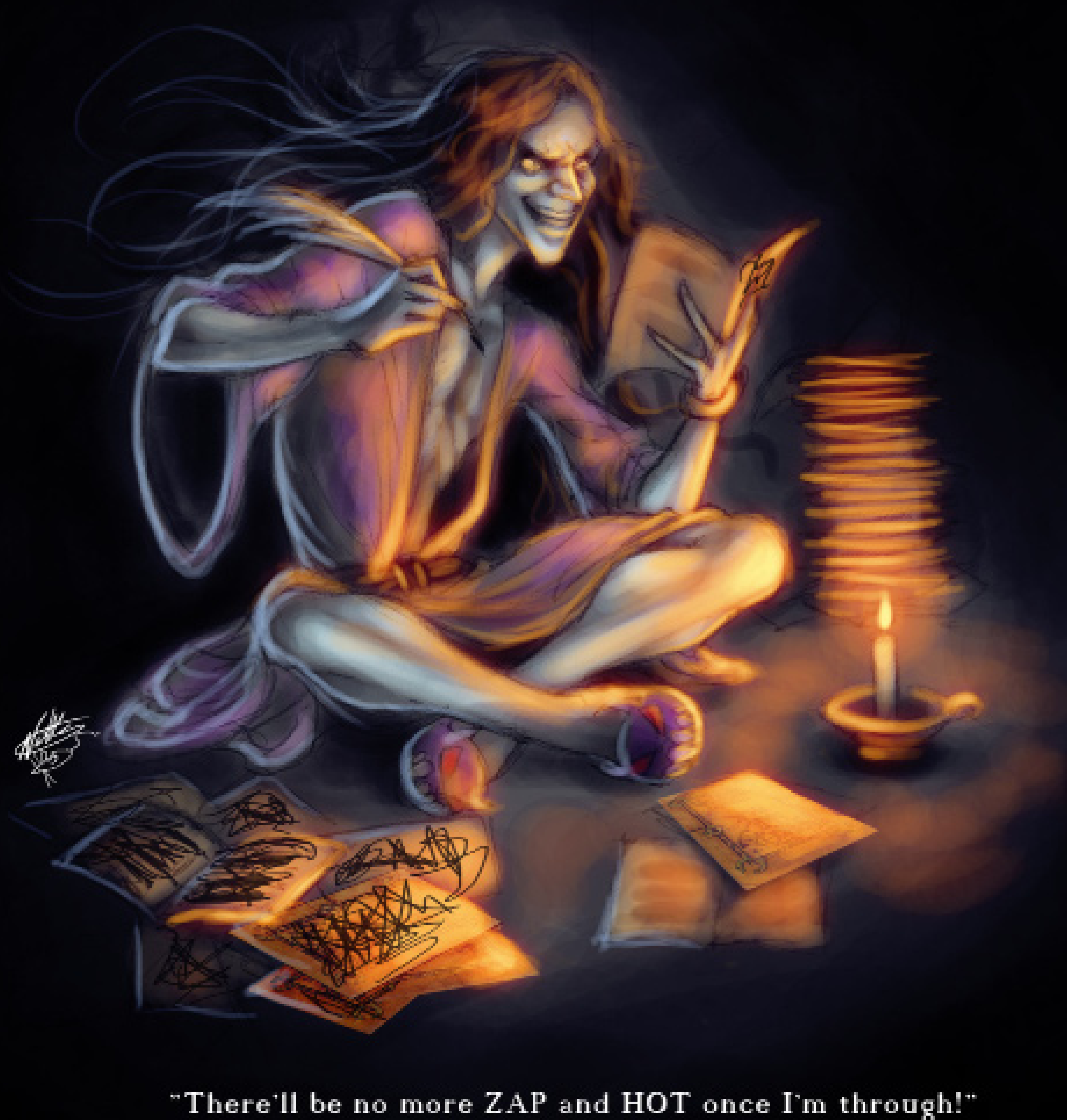

"There'll be no more ZAP and HOT once I'm through!"